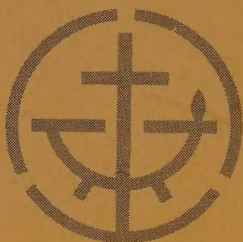


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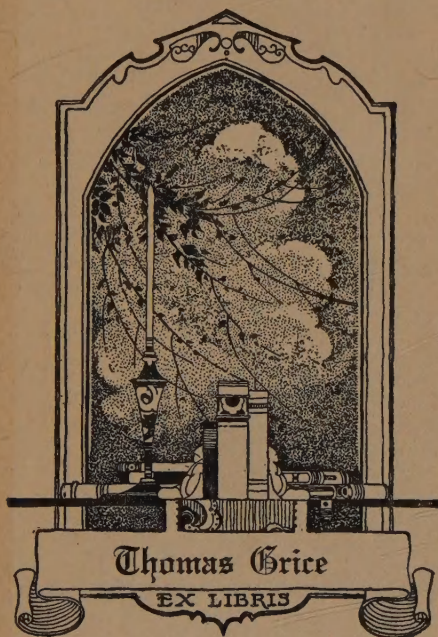
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TWENTY SERMONS ON
INTERROGATORY TEXTS

By
JOHN L. BRANDT, LL.D., 1860-
*Author of "The Lord's Supper," "Soul Saving,"
"Turning Points," etc.*



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PREFACE

ONE of the most effective methods of instruction is the asking and answering of questions.

Christ used this method, and the street, the shop, the market-place, the exchange, the home, the boat, the mountain-side, as well as the Temple and synagogue, formed His school. Christ affirmed the truth in asking the question, and by His authority established it. He addressed direct and indirect questions both to His disciples and to His enemies. He used this method in kindness and love, in order to teach them, to obtain their views, and sometimes to silence the cavilling of His enemies.

In the New Testament there are nine hundred and forty-six questions asked; 163 in Matthew; 114 in Mark, 135 in Luke, 165 in John, sixty-seven in Acts, eighty-six in Romans, 112 in 1 Corinthians, eighteen in 2 Corinthians, twenty-three in Galatians, and sixty-three in the remainder of the New Testament. Some of these questions are duplicated in the four Gospels; but the large number are independent questions and show the importance of this method of teaching used by Christ and the apostles in making known the glad tidings to the world.

The first question asked about Jesus was by the

Wise Men: "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" (Matt. 2: 2). Thus, as a babe in the manger, men began to inquire about Him. One of the last questions asked about Him was by Pontius Pilate: "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?" (Matt. 27: 22). Ever since He appeared on earth, men have been asking questions about Him and coming to Him with their questions.

The Jewish teachers and rulers resorted to questions in their efforts to confuse and tempt Him, but were always foiled in their attempt.

All classes came to Jesus with their questions: The scribes asked: "Why walk not the disciples according to the traditions of the elders?" The Pharisees asked: "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?" The Herodians asked: "Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?" The Sadducees asked about the woman who had had seven husbands: "In the resurrection whose wife shall she be then?" A rich young ruler asked: "What good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" A lawyer asked: "Master, which is the greatest commandment of the law?" John the Baptist asked: "Art thou he that should come?" The unclean spirits cried out: "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come to torment us before our time?" The chief priests asked: "Art thou the Christ, the Son of God?" Pilate, the Roman governor, asked: "Art thou the King of the Jews?" His disciples asked Him many

questions. Christ was never puzzled, never evinced any doubt, and never turned a person away without an answer.

The Apostle Paul was a logician in asking and answering questions: "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid." "If God be for us, who shall be against us?" "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" This question was answered, by a tremendous sweep of Paul's imagination, as follows: "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

When difficulties arose in the early Church the complaint was generally expressed as being about certain questions. The governor considered the Jews' accusations against Paul as questions of their own superstitions. Paul wrote to Timothy: "But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strife." And, to Titus: "Avoid foolish questions . . . and contentions and strivings about the law. . . ."

A study of the questions in the New Testament Scriptures will show that Christ and the apostles covered the whole body of truth and doctrine in asking and answering questions.

Christ is the greatest character of all ages—and the greatest of all questions. His teachings, miracles, reve-

lations, claims, death, resurrection, life, and program for the world's redemption confounded the Jewish people, and they have been confounding the civilized world ever since. Christ is not only the greatest question of the world, but in His teachings and spirit He has the solution of the great problems that have been confronting and troubling men of all races and religions.

From the many questions asked in the New Testament I have selected some of the most outstanding for the texts of the sermons in this volume. In their preparation I have had recourse to the sermons of many of the world's greatest preachers and the writings of many eminent Bible scholars, and I acknowledge my indebtedness to them for valuable suggestions and help. I now release this volume on "Great Bible Questions" and dedicate it to my brethren in the ministry and to my many Christian friends who are interested in God's word and the advancement of His kingdom.

J. L. B.

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CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. MY FATHER'S BUSINESS | 11 |
| <i>Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?—Luke 2:49.</i> | |
| 2. THE FIRST DISCIPLES | 22 |
| <i>What seek ye? . . . Come and see.—John 1:38, 39.</i> | |
| 3. THE POSSIBILITIES OF LIFE | 38 |
| <i>Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?—John 1:46.</i> | |
| 4. THE ONLY HOPE OF THE WORLD | 49 |
| <i>Lord, to whom shall we go?—John 6:68.</i> | |
| 5. THE FAITH OF GREAT MEN | 64 |
| <i>Have any of the rulers believed on him?—John 7:48.</i> | |
| 6. THE SINLESSNESS OF CHRIST | 80 |
| <i>Which of you convicteth me of sin?—John 8:46.</i> | |
| 7. THE PRISONER'S QUESTION | 89 |
| <i>Art thou he that cometh or look we for another?—Matthew 11:3.</i> | |
| 8. THE CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP | 99 |
| <i>How is it that I hear this of thee? Give an account of thy stewardship.—Luke 16:2.</i> | |
| 9. THE BUILDING OF THE CHURCH | 120 |
| <i>Whom say ye that I am?—Matthew 16:15.</i> | |
| 10. PROFIT AND LOSS | 132 |
| <i>What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?—Mark 8:36.</i> | |
| 11. CHRISTIANITY VERSUS MORALITY | 144 |
| <i>Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?—Matthew 19:16.</i> | |

12. THE QUESTION OF THE CHRIST 160
What think ye of the Christ?—Matthew 22:42.
13. LOVE FOR THE MASTER 173
Lovest thou me?—John 21:16.
14. THE SOURCE OF POWER 183
*By what power or in what name have ye done this?—
 Acts 4:7.*
15. THE WAY OF SALVATION 197
What must I do to be saved?—Acts 16:30.
16. FINDING THE LOST TRIBES 210
*Who are the Israelites.—Romans 9:4.
 Will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles?—
 John 7:35.*
17. MAN'S PURPOSE AND DESTINY 231
*What is man that thou art mindful of him?—Hebrews
 2:6.*
18. THE DANGER OF DELAY 246
*How shall we escape if we neglect so great salva-
 tion?—Hebrews 2:3.*
19. THE QUESTION OF LIFE 257
What is your life?—James 4:14.
20. THE RESURRECTION 270
*How say some among you that there is no resurrection
 of the dead?—I Corinthians 15:12.*

MY FATHER'S BUSINESS

Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?
—LUKE 2: 49.

THIS text is taken from the story of Jesus in the Temple at the age of twelve. It is the sole recorded incident of His childhood days. At this age He went up with Mary and Joseph to Jerusalem to the Passover Feast. The age of twelve was an important period in the life of the Jewish boy; at that age he ceased to be a boy and, in the letter of the law, became a man; at that age he was obliged to learn a trade for his own support; at that age, according to Jewish writers, Moses left the house of Pharaoh's daughter; at that age Samuel was called; at that age Solomon rendered a judgment that revealed his wisdom; at that age Josiah began his great reform; at that age a Jewish boy was permitted to fight in battle in defence of his nation or religion; at that age he was considered man enough to engage to be married; at that age he assumed the responsibilities of the law; at that age he went up to the national feasts to worship. This was an interesting time for the boy Jesus. Now He is crossing the barrier to a greater world; now He is taking a journey that will awaken childish interest and mysteries; now He is to travel over eighty miles that is rich in history; now He is going over ground where battles have been fought that deter-

mined the destiny of nations; now He is going through cities and lands of prophets, priests and kings; now He is going up to the city that was selected by David as the capital of the Jewish people.

Women were not bound to go to the Passover Feast, but Mary, like Hannah, would call it a joy and privilege and not a burden to go to Jerusalem to celebrate this great annual feast. The road they travelled was haunted in some places by wild beasts and bandits, and for defense, the people would keep together. As they journeyed, they doubtless sang songs and psalms, and rejoiced because they were enabled to dwell together in unity and peace. Jesus doubtless took part in the songs and understood their meanings. His soul must have been thrilled with many memories as He saw the Jordan and other scenes about which He must have heard and read in His home. About the fourth day, according to the rate of Jewish travel, they must have come in sight of the city, and the pilgrims shouted, "I will lift up mine eyes to the hills whence cometh my help."

Never was a city on earth so dearly loved as Jerusalem, whose name is used for the city on high, which is the mother of us all. As He approached the city from the mountain on the north, Jesus' eyes would see the triple walls encircling the great city so sacred in Bible song and story. What interests must Jesus have had as He travelled through the city with its throngs of people from many nations under the heavens! What sights of Roman soldiers with flashing spears and swords; what busy streets with bazaars of interested traders; what scenes of staircases, pillars and arches greet the eyes of the lad! And yet, from all these He turns away to the Temple to worship and to learn of

the doctors and to ask them questions—questions, perhaps, He had asked of His mother, who told Him there were doctors in the Temple who could give a better answer than she.

When Mary and Joseph started for home, they thought the boy Jesus was with their kinsfolk. It was customary for the men to travel by themselves in one company and the women in another, the boys travelling either with father or mother, or with some company of their kin. This may explain why Jesus was lost, or His parents may have had sufficient confidence in Him that it was not thought needful to be troubled about His whereabouts; but when they sought Him and found Him not, they turned back in search of Him. It required another day to reach Jerusalem, and it appears that it took a considerable part of the third day before they found Him. Where did they seek Him? Not in marts of trade; not in the halls of pleasure; not in the bazaars; not in the back alleys at play; but in the Temple where He was learning from the doctors of the law and astounding them by His questions. It is natural that He should be in the Temple enjoying the Temple music, service and instruction given by the doctors of the law. His nature and home rearing would be in harmony with the Temple-worship. And when they found Him they were astonished. It is noticeable that His mother speaks to Him first. He belonged to her rather than to Joseph. Said she, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing (or rather, 'in grief')." The sword of the prophet was piercing her heart. Note Jesus' answer: "How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

This answer, so natural, so sublime, bears upon itself the stamp of authenticity. It appears as if He were astonished that they should not understand Him. "The perfect dignity, the perfect humility and the perfect wisdom it combines placed the answer beyond the possibility of invention." It is the one priceless glimpse of His life that was to be spent in furthering the most important business in the world, the redemption of man. His answer was a gentle reminder that Joseph was not His father but that God was. It appears as a gentle rebuke indicating that He would not be found in outward shows or haunts of pleasure but in the Temple of God. If the child is father to the man, then His question presages the kind of man Jesus afterward became. The answer reflects His life and teachings as recorded in the New Testament. It is said that Mary "kept all these things in her heart." It may have been an indication that she knew, to some extent, what Jesus knew more clearly would be His life's purpose.

The schools in which Jesus learned were not the schools of the scribes, but the home school, the synagogue school, the school of holy obedience, of stainless purity, of sweet contentment, of cheerful toil. His knowledge of the sacred Scriptures was deep and extensive, for He made quotations from them as if He knew them from memory. The language He spoke was Aramaic, known only to the more educated and only to be acquired by much labour; yet Jesus was acquainted with it, for some of His quotations refer directly to the Hebrew religion. He must have been familiar with Greek, for it was spoken in many towns in Galilee as a common medium of intercourse and without a knowledge of it He could have held no con-

versation with strangers. The Latin tongue was used extensively by the Romans and inscribed upon the coins in ordinary use, and it is highly probable that Jesus was acquainted with this language. But whatever He may have learned from His mother, the synagogue, the scribes and the Old Testament Scriptures, we know that His best teaching was derived from an immediate insight into his Father's will. Therefore, from the depth of His conscience, did the voice of God speak.

It is interesting to notice how Jesus refers to "My Father." This is the term He uses for "God." He always spoke of Him as "My Father." Note some of the phrases: "My Father's business." "Father, I thank thee." "Father, forgive them." "Father, glorify thou me." "That they all may be one as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee." "O righteous Father." "The Father himself loveth you." "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Jesus seemed to have a different relationship with the Father from that of His disciples, for He taught them to say "Our Father." "Your Father and my Father, your God and my God." He spoke of God as the "heavenly Father." He drove the traders out of the Temple because they were desecrating "the temple of His Father." It was His meet to do His Father's will. Thus in the life of the Youth at the age of twelve, He declares He is "about His Father's business."

What is the Father's business? We hear school-pupils say, "My studies." We hear business men say, "My business," "My plans." We hear the housewife say, "My home-duties," "My children." And with what interest do we hear the child Jesus say, "My Father's business." He must refer to some business

of importance that belongs to the Father. That business is the redemption of man; it is the business of providing for the restoration of the purity, blessedness and immortality of man; it is the business of saving man from sin, its power, pollution and penalty; it is the business of establishing among men the kingdom of heaven; it is the business of proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ; it is the business of preaching the Gospel of Christ as the power of God unto salvation.

Our Father's business requires preparation. The world is growing tired of inefficiency, tired of incompetency, mediocrity and ignorance. The world of commerce and agriculture, the world of art and science, the world of letters and statesmanship as well as the world of redemption calls for prepared workers, earnest, efficient workers, workers approved of God, workers who do well what they do. To do the Father's business and to succeed in it requires an efficiency and consecration that comes from the study of God's Word, the association with God's people, the communion with God in prayer and a close walk with Jesus.

The Father's business requires work. Our nation presents a mighty army of workers. God made man to work. He placed him in the garden of Eden and told him to dress it and keep it. When he was driven out of the garden he was told to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. Jesus was amongst us as one who serves. He said, "I must work the works of him who sent me while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work." Paul says, "If a man will not work, neither shall he eat." Many people are nervous, fussy, fidgety and in a hurry, but that does not signify

work. The Father's business requires a definite work that is frequently called "The work of the Lord," "The labour of love." In every enterprise there should be a definite object to be attained. And in the Master's vineyard there are special activities where every Christian should find something definite to do, and count that day lost whose evening fails to bring him nearer to some worthy purpose. A man may go about his daily duties and magnify them by working in the Christian spirit, doing well what he has to do with a hearty good will toward his fellow-men. There are so many idlers standing about the market-place in this day and age that we need to heed the voice of Jesus saying, "Why stand ye here all the day idle? . . . Go work in my vineyard."

Our Father's business requires willing workers. When Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the city it was said of those that went with him that they had a "mind to work." It was said of Jesus that He had a zeal for the house of God. Paul had such a zeal for the salvation of his brethren that he declared his heart's prayer and desire was that they might be saved; again he declared he was willing to be accursed for their salvation. The call comes ringing in our ears from many a Macedonia—"Come over and help us." Our Father says, "Who will go?" Who has the willingness and consecration to answer in the words of Isaiah, "Here am I, send me."

Our Father's business requires haste and dispatch. When David came to Abimelech he was in such haste and on such important business that he brought neither bread nor spear, and gave as his reason for not doing so the fact that "the king's business required haste." There are some Bible scholars that see in this state-

ment a reference to the spiritual kingdom of our Lord and Saviour. Our Father's business requires haste, for it is the most important business in the world. It is of so much importance that Jesus in sending out the early disciples told them to "salute no man by the way." These salutations required much formality such as hand-clasping, kissing, thanksgiving, questions and answers and some of these, often repeated, required so much time that Jesus forbade saluting any man by the way. Souls were perishing and calling for help. This urgency of the Gospel runs all through the Scriptures. On one occasion when Jesus called a man to follow Him, the man desired to go home and bid his folks good-bye, but Jesus forbade him. On another occasion when He called a man to follow Him the man requested to be permitted to go home to bury his father, but Jesus said, "Let the dead bury their dead." The principle of this teaching enforces the urgency of being about our Father's business. Says Christ, "Agree with thine adversary quickly." It does not mean to run a race, but it does mean that "now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." It does mean that "this is our opportunity for service that will soon pass away."

Haste is essential, because men are under the sentence of death. Haste is essential, because our children are forming habits that are determining their character and destiny. Haste is essential because the devil is never idle. Haste is essential because our day is fast passing away, and we must sound the trumpet so that the blood of no man be upon our heads. Haste is essential because the day of judgment draweth nigh, when we shall be called upon to answer before the judgment seat of Christ for the deeds done in the body.

Haste is essential because Jesus declares His Father's business comes first. "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness"—first in point of time, first as regards importance, first before domestic claims, before worldly business and pleasures.

The Father's business is imperative. Jesus said, "I must be about my Father's business." Emphasize that word "*must*." When He began His ministry at the age of thirty, He said, "I must preach the Gospel." That word "*must*" is used thirty times in the New Testament in relation to Christ's work, mission, suffering, death and resurrection. Said He, "I must preach the kingdom of God." "Ye must be born again." "I must walk today and tomorrow and the day following." "I must work the works of him that sent me." "The passover must be fulfilled." "The Christ must suffer many things." "The Son of man must be delivered up." "All things must be fulfilled." "He must rise again." "He must reign." There are many other passages wherein the word "*must*" is implied showing both the imperative demand and the urgency of the Gospel. The apostles were impressed with this imperative mission and declared before the high priest, "We must obey God rather than man." "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Jesus began His early life about His Father's business and in closing His earthly ministry He declared He had finished the work His Father had given Him to do, and had manifested His Father's name unto His disciples. His Father's business was His mission. His Father's business took Him from city to city to preach the Gospel, heal the sick and comfort the sorrowing; His Father's business sent Him to the garden of Geth-

semane and made Him cry out: "If it be possible let this cup pass from me;" His Father's business made Him tread the winepress alone; His Father's business bruised Him for our iniquities; His Father's business made Him despise the shame; His Father's business plowed His back with a scourge; His Father's business blindfolded, mocked and spit upon Him; His Father's business made Him bear the cross to Calvary; His Father's business pierced His hands and feet with nails; His Father's business made Him yield to an ignominious death, though it was voluntary; His Father's business hung Him as an innocent victim upon the cross; His Father's business sent Him to preach to the spirits in prison; His Father's business raised Him from the dead, took Him to Heaven and crowned Him King of kings where He is still about His Father's business; His Father's business sent the Holy Spirit to the world to convince men of sin because they believed not on Jesus. His Father is our Father, and His business is our business. As the Father sent Jesus so Jesus sends us; He sends us into the world and commissions us to attend to the Father's business.

It is the Father's business for us to preach the Gospel to every creature, to "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." It is the Father's business for us to carry our religion into the common engagements of life, to sweeten our enjoyments, to purify our pleasures and to sanctify our business transactions. We are about our Father's business when we are helping to bear the burdens of the heavy-laden, comforting the sorrowing, smoothing the pillow of the sick, and making the pathway of the discouraged blossom with

good will and kindness. We are about our Father's business when we are loving our neighbours as ourselves and doing good to them that despitefully use us. We are about our Father's business when we are seeking to rear our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We are about our Father's business when we are living righteous, temperate and sober lives; we are about our Father's business when we are loving mercy, walking humbly, and doing justly. We are about our Father's business when we are saving souls from sin, building Christian character and doing our part to regenerate the community in which we live. We should keep diligently about our Father's business until we finish our course and are ready to be about our Father's business in that heavenly home that Jesus has gone to prepare for us.

THE FIRST DISCIPLES

What seek ye? . . . Come and see.—JOHN 1: 38, 39.

JOHN the Baptist stood and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, ‘Behold the Lamb of God.’ And the two disciples heard him speak and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned and saw them following and saith unto them, what seek ye? They said unto him, Master, where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, Come and see.”

In the beginning of the Old Testament we have the story of two brothers, Cain and Abel. In the beginning of the New Testament we have the record of two brothers, Andrew and Peter; but the attitude toward each other is entirely different. In the former, Cain kills his brother Abel as a result of envy and jealousy. In the latter, Andrew, out of love for his brother, searches for him till he finds him and brings him to Jesus. This chapter contains the record of the first disciples of Jesus, and of personal service in winning loved ones to Christ. John the Baptist had proclaimed Jesus as the “Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world,” and two of his disciples became interested in Jesus and this declaration, and curious to know where He dwelt, followed Him. Jesus, turning and seeing them following after Him, said, “What seek ye?” It was not intended as a rebuke; He did not

wish it to appear that they were going to invade His retirement; He knew their motives and in kindness to encourage and help draw out their minds, He asked the question, "What seek ye?" as if to say, for what purpose are you following Me, what is your petition and your request?

Our Saviour frequently used the word "seek;" it appears many times in the word of God. "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." "Seek and ye shall find." "They that seek me early shall find me." "Seek the Lord while he may be found." "It is time to seek the Lord." "Seek ye me and ye shall live." "Christ came to seek and to save the lost." In the beginning of His public ministry, we have men seeking Christ and Christ seeking men.

Some years ago at a county fair a little child was lost from its mother. On one side of the grounds the child was crying and seeking its mother, and on the other side the mother, heartbroken, was seeking the child. There was great joy when the child found the mother, and the mother found the child. So Christ is seeking men and men are seeking Christ and great is the joy when they find each other.

In this busy world men are running to and fro, seeking something. Some seeking wealth, some seeking pleasure, some seeking fame, some seeking profit, some seeking preferment; but the most profitable search is to find the Lord. This is both a duty and a privilege. The person sought is the Son of God, the Saviour of men. To seek Him, implies to learn His teachings, His salvation, His way, His life; a willingness to do His will, to believe in Him and to obey His commandments. The term here used implies a diligent search,

as expressed elsewhere, "Ye shall find me when ye shall search for me with all your heart." If you seek for wisdom you will find it in Christ; if you seek the truth, Jesus will give it; if you seek for pardon of sins, He will grant it; if you seek for love and mercy, He will supply your need according to His riches in glory. Whether men know it or not they are seeking rest for the heart, truth for the understanding, goodness for their conscience, and even when running after other things, they are seeking for love, sympathy and help that only Christ can give.

These two disciples, to avoid embarrassment, asked the question, "Where dwellest thou?" They recognized the authority of Christ when they addressed Him as Rabbi, which is, being interpreted, Master. By this question they intimate their willingness to withdraw from following after Him and manifest a hidden desire to visit Him some other time. Jesus did not tell them where He dwelt. We may be sure it was not in a profane assembly, but was probably in some nearby dwelling. His reply removes all embarrassment and gives them a most blessed cordial and pleasant invitation to come and see. To come as welcome guests to where He dwelt. This remarkable invitation in the beginning of Christ's ministry is in harmony with all of His public ministry and life.

Let us examine this invitation. This little word "come," like the word "seek," occurs many times in the Scriptures. It is peculiar to the Christian religion. Other religions do not give invitations to come to the Saviour of men. "Come and see." "Come, for all things are now ready." "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink." "Come unto me all ye that

are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest.” “And the spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” It was an invitation to come and see face to face the long-promised Messiah; come and see the only Mediator between God and man; come and see the True Ladder reaching from heaven to earth; come and see the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father; come and see the manifestation of Divine Perfections exhibited in infinite wisdom, power, goodness, mercy, and love; come and see the Soul Dispenser of spiritual blessings. Come and see the Redeemer of men who has pardon for the guilty, purity for the defiled, salvation for the lost, peace for the unhappy, light for those in darkness. Come *now* and see for yourselves.

Andrew and John came and saw where Jesus dwelt, and abode with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. They had ample time to satisfy all doubt, to have all their questions answered and by seeing Jesus, their belief in Him was confirmed. That day was a turning-point in their lives; that day their eyes were opened; that day they had a personal experience ever to be remembered; that day they found Jesus, their Saviour; that day was a revelation to them; that day was a happy day of grace; that day was attended with far-reaching results; that day they found Him who was manifest to take away the sin of the world—manifest to take away the pollution, guilt and penalty of sin. That day their hearts were surrendered to Jesus and bound to Him with tender cords, and they left with their hearts burning with

eager desire to enlist in the service of Christ and bring others to Him.

Our attention will now be directed to *Andrew the soul-winner*. He goes in search of his brother Simon to declare the truth to him and to bring him to Jesus. He manifests the zeal of a true missionary. Having found the Pearl of Great Price, he is eager to have his brother share it with him. He is not content to wait until he should meet with Simon; he loses no time, he goes immediately in search of him. This is particularly noted; no matter if the day was far spent, no matter how many obstacles were in the way, he did not delay. His conduct is especially marked. He is in earnest. He sets a good example to all the disciples of Christ throughout the whole world and for all ages to come. This, the first disciple of Jesus, sets an example of encouragement and practical usefulness to all others.

But little is told about Andrew and the work of his life. The Bible says nothing about his eloquence, his intellectual attainments, his exploits. It tells us nothing about whether he was a writer of an epistle, the founder of a church, or the missionary to a foreign field; yet, in an unostentatious way, we are informed that he was the first disciple of Christ; the first disciple to make the truth known that Jesus was the Messiah; and the first chosen to be an apostle. He was only an ordinary man. He is better known from his relation to Peter, his brother whom God enabled to do such great things, than by his own works.

His first work was in the home. He was a true brother. Many of the great characters named in the Bible were connected by family ties, such as Abraham and his son Isaac; Isaac and his son Jacob; Jacob and

his son Joseph; Moses, Miriam and Aaron; Samuel and his sons; David and his son Solomon. Among the disciples of the Lord were Andrew and Peter; James and John; James the Less and Jude. Andrew follows a natural instinct in carrying the glad tidings to his brother. He begins at the nearest point—his own household. He does not wait for a great occasion to make known the truth. His heart is full. He loves his brother; and to him, as one of the nearest and truest friends in the world, he goes with the message of salvation. He rejoices in his great discovery, and was eager to have his brother partake of that joy. Doubtless he knew that his brother Simon was of a noble, earnest and affectionate nature, and one who would be of great service to Christ. Sympathy and love hastened him to the companion of his boyhood and youth; the sharer of his sports, interests and occupations. He declares the truth in a few momentous words; it is a plain, blunt declaration: "We have found the Messiah." No brother ever conveyed tidings more interesting and more heart-stirring. No brother ever set a better example for the disciples of Christ; an example to go in quest of those akin and near in affection to ourselves. "We have found the Messiah"—a glorious truth! The greatest of discoveries! Great interest is connected with all striking discoveries whether in geographical research or physical science or in mechanical arts. In great discoveries there is either material, intellectual, or spiritual gain; but what mechanical invention, scientific discovery, or geographical survey can compare with the discovery that there is a Christ? All discoveries pale before the one that Andrew made: "We have found the Messiah." To find Christ is better than to find a Klondike

gold mine. "We have found the Messiah"—the Hidden Treasure—the Pearl of Great Price—the dearly beloved Son of God.

"We have found the Messiah," for whom our people have been looking for centuries; we have found Him whom prophets, priest and kings have longed to see and saw not. From the early history of the Jews down through the centuries, they had looked with high hopes for the coming of one who would bring to them countless blessings; their children were taught the prophecies and precious promises of the Scriptures about the coming of the Messiah, who would be heaven-sent as their Deliverer and the Prince of Peace; and now Andrew declares that he has found Him, dwelt with Him, and seen Him. Many times thereafter, Andrew found Jesus anew. In the Sermon on the Mount, when He fed the thousands, when He stilled the storm, when He raised the dead, when they met in the upper room, when He bowed in Gethsemane, when He hung on Calvary and when He ascended on high. "We have found the Messiah," Him who is able to supply all the yearnings of the heart, and the cravings of our souls. Him who is able to fill our mind with the wisdom and knowledge of God, and our heart with the love of God. "We have found the Messiah." We have found Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; Him before whom the angels bow; Him who is beloved of God; Him the searcher of hearts; Him the fulfillment of prophecies; Him the revealer of the last covenant of God. It was a discovery which Andrew could not keep to himself. He found so much joy in this discovery, so much wealth in this Christ, that he must have Peter come and share this joy and wealth with him. He has found the long-desired Prophet, Priest,

and King, Counsellor, Friend and Brother; and he searches out Peter and declares this discovery to him. Andrew, in this declaration, brings, as it were, Jesus to Peter: "We have found the Messiah."

Society is blessed by the salvation and purity of its individual members. Institutions are uplifted by individuals. Modern civilization is high-principled as the result of Andrew's discovery. Andrew does not wait until he receives a theological training from Jesus; he starts out to spread the good news with an imperfect equipment, but with a heartfelt conviction that he had seen Jesus, the Saviour of men; he does not intend to keep the great discovery to himself; his first thought is of his brother, his heart is overflowing with the joyful news, he can think of nothing else; as his heart burns within him, his eyes flash light, his face shines, and his voice rings out, "Simon, we have found Christ." Andrew is not satisfied with telling his brother of the good news; he is constrained to bring his brother to Christ. He persuaded him to accompany him to Jesus, to come into real loving contact with the Messiah. He had a deep interest in his brother, and was anxious that he behold the Messiah that was promised to the world. The Bible declares, "He brought him to Jesus." This was better than to have brought him to the palace of the Cæsars or to the wealth of a Rothschild. This was Andrew's first work and perhaps his greatest work. Peter was Andrew's gift to Jesus. It was a service that he rendered both to Jesus and to Peter. It was a blessing and a joy to Peter and to himself.

Andrew's subsequent labours. But little is known of Andrew after this introduction. The Scriptures tell us that it was he who found the little lad with the

barley-loaves and fishes and brought him with his store to Jesus. The third time he appears is when certain Greeks came to worship at the feast, and desired to see Jesus; and Andrew and Philip together introduced them to Jesus. Thus on three occasions, when the Gospel writer speaks of Andrew, he informs us that he is engaged in introducing others to Jesus. From his own brother, he emerges into the wider interest that every Christian should feel in humanity at large. Andrew never appears as betraying himself, or glorying in his position, or boasting of his dignity, or occupying the Lord's time with his own affairs; but he appears as bringing others to Christ that they may see Him and be blessed by Him. Tradition assigns Greece and Asia Minor as the scenes of his ministry; and states that he finally came to a city of Achaia where the magistrate became enraged at his persistent preaching and commanded him to join in sacrifices to the heathen gods; but Andrew refused to do so, and thereupon the magistrate ordered him to be severely scourged and crucified, and to make his death more lingering, he was fastened to the cross not with nails, but with cords, and he hung upon the cross two days praising God, and exhorting the spectators to become Christians before he expired.

There are some valuable lessons to be learned from the life and labours of Andrew.

The spirit of humility. Andrew brought Peter to Jesus, and Peter immediately began to overshadow Andrew, and fill the larger place; but this gave no jealousy nor enmity to Andrew. His heart was not wounded; his spirit was not lifted up. He had the satisfaction of proclaiming the good news to his brother. He displayed a spirit of self-effacement, and

it sufficed him to know that Peter was a mighty man in the service of the Lord. Peter was great in his work; and Andrew was great in his willingness to be the least. Though least in his brother's brightness, he never thrusts himself forward; though being the first disciple, he never boasts of this fact; though being named as the first of the apostles, yet he never sought this honour; though being superseded by his brother, he never asked to share in his honours; though being eclipsed by the shadow of his rock brother, he is content to occupy the subordinate place full of temptation, and he triumphs in his humility. He is content to shine as a satellite by the side of his brother planet.

The lesson of soul-winning. What Andrew did in bringing his brother to Christ, is what all Christians should do in like circumstances. He did not delay, neither should we. He brought Peter to Jesus while Jesus was near, while his own soul was in earnest, while Peter was at hand. He had found a treasure and seemed to say within himself, "Would that my dear brother were a sharer of my joy." And he hastens to his brother, his companion, the child of his own parents, the sharer of his own toils, the partner of his own business, and brings him to Jesus. And thus, parents, children, brothers, sisters, husbands and wives should bring their relatives to the Lord, that they may dwell in unity under His influence. Those who are bound to you by the tender ties of kinship and family affection, you should earnestly strive to bring to Christ; you should become an instrument in the hands of the Lord in having those earthly ties sanctified by the stronger spiritual ties. The love of Jesus should constrain you and urge you to bring the members of your family and the circle of your acquaintance, then

those of the same community, and then your love should stretch out to all mankind. This is the true Christian spirit. If you have eaten of the manna from on high, give of it to your loved ones, that their hunger may be satisfied. If you have partaken of the water of life, hand it on to your loved ones that their thirst may be slaked. If you have received the joy of forgiveness, bring your dear ones to Christ that they too may partake of the redemption that is in Jesus.

The least may influence the greatest. Andrew's service suggests the great power of influence, and shows it to be independent of personal superiority. The least may influence the greatest. Andrew, in his activities, seems to have been amongst the least of the apostles; and yet he influenced the one who took the foremost place among them in zeal and activity. It shows that the great and gifted are not alone in exercising the minister's power of influence. No man liveth to himself. This is a universal law. As Andrew influenced Peter to come to Christ, so you may, though limited in your ability, and restricted by your position, bring souls of great power to Jesus.

This character is much needed in the Church today. There is room for only a limited number of such leaders as was Peter; but there is room for an unlimited number of such unostentatious servants as was Andrew. The men and women of single talents must exercise them for the Lord. Andrew has set the example. Though no mention be made of your name, though no worldly acknowledgment be given of your service, though no praises be heaped upon you; yet in your modest way, and in your obscure home, you are to bring others to Christ. This service that was rendered was the result of Andrew's experience. It

was rendered by the uttering of the one sentence, "We have found the Messiah." He set the example of being "saved to serve," of "each one win one." He did not wait to preach to a large congregation, he delivered his message to one person, and that one person was closely bound to him by the ties of kinship. The Bible sets great stress upon *one soul*, it speaks of joy amongst the angels over *one sinner* coming to repentance; it speaks of the *one sheep* which was brought home with rejoicing, of the *one piece* of money the poor woman found; of the *one son* that returned from wandering. One soul won to Christ is of infinite value in the sight of God.

In so far as you have ability, you are required, not only by the example of Andrew, but by the commandment of Jesus, to win souls to Christ. If all the Andrews of the Church would set to work to bring their brothers to Christ, behold what stupendous results there would be.

The momentous results. Peter was brought to Christ. Peter accepted Christ. Peter followed Christ. Peter became a faithful servant of Christ. Andrew had a brother and kinsman in the Lord. The Lord had an apostle. The Church had a most illustrious helper and example. The disciples had a leader who was able to brave opposition and lead them on to victory. Peter used the keys in opening the Kingdom of heaven on earth. He spoke with tongues. He foiled enemies. He tore down the strongholds of Satan. He founded churches. He introduced the Gospel to the Gentiles. He wrote epistles. He became a mighty power on earth, whose labours of love and works of faith flow on with increasing blessings to mankind. If you follow in the footsteps of Andrew you may influence

some one to come to Jesus who, like Peter, will stand as a mighty rock in the history of the Church. You have the opportunity to do this work; you have the example before you; is there not someone in your home, or in your neighbourhood that you can persuade to come to Jesus. It may appear but a little thing for you to do, but the results may be astounding. A woman wrote a letter to an evangelist that resulted in the establishment of a church. A Sunday-school girl persuaded her father to accompany her to the Sunday-school, and he afterwards became a Sunday-school worker and established hundreds of Sunday-schools, most of which grew into churches. A mother was patient, prayerful and persistent in the rearing of her two boys, who afterwards became founders of Methodism. It was apparently a fruitless effort for the evangelist to preach several weeks in Ohio, and have but one convert; yet that one convert became Bishop Simpson, who overshadowed the man who led him to Christ. Handel, the great musician, is known of throughout the world, but the name of his teacher has been forgotten.

In closing I call your attention to the invitation "Come and see." This precious invitation has come ringing down the ages, Come and see what Christ is,—the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. See how He humbled Himself to be born in the manger. See His life of sorrow, self-denial, and reproach. See His miracles of mercy and grace. See His overwhelming agony in Gethsemane. See Him offer up His soul for the sins of His people. See Him suffering on the ignominious cross between two thieves. See Him rising from the grave on the morn of the third day. See Him ascending to the heavens, and being

crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. See Him who was alive and was dead, and who is now living forevermore, and has the keys of death and hades, and who is the Resurrection and the Life. Millions have gone to Him, pondered His claims, thought of His character, contemplated His works, listened to His teachings and have been constrained to say as did Andrew, "We have found the Messiah."

Come and see what Christ has done. Herein is a reasonable test: Come and see what He has done for the elevation of woman, for the protection of childhood, for the healing of the sick, for the treatment of the distressed, for the comfort of the sorrowing, for the salvation of the human race. Come and see what He did for Andrew and Peter. What He did for Saul of Tarsus. Did He not change him from a zealous persecutor, into a man known for his spiritual power, the breadth of his doctrines, and the exaltation of his hope? Did He not change Mary of Magdala from being a castaway to a woman of virtue? Did He not change Augustine from a pleasure-seeking young man who broke the heart of his mother to become a mighty minister of the Gospel and a holy power in the realm of thought? Did He not change Martin Luther from being a depressed and hopeless monk to become the greatest reformer of Christendom? Did He not change John B. Gough from the drunkard of the ditch to become one of the foremost temperance workers of the land? Look around you, and you will see at your very doors what Christ has done. His labours of love are an open book. Secular historians have recorded His influence upon society, upon the education of the young, upon the humane treatment of the poor, upon commerce and upon politics. He has been the greatest

benefactor of the human race and stands foremost in the world in efforts to brighten the prospects of mankind and to lift the world to a higher ideal of a moral and spiritual power.

Come and see what Christ will do for you. This must be of practical interest. This is necessary to form a just estimate of His character, mission and work. Come and see whether He will give you the pardon of sins and peace of conscience. Come and see whether He will inspire you with most sacred motives for moral life. Come and see whether His love and friendship will cheer you in the hours of sorrow and temptation. Come and see whether His grace is sufficient for you in the changes and experiences of life. Come and see whether He will vanquish death for you and assure you of a blessed immortality. If you will "come and see," you will know whether Jesus is all He claims to be, and the question will be answered whether He is the Son of God the Saviour of men. The Samaritan woman saw Jesus and she declared that He told her all that she ever did. Nathanael saw Him and confessed his faith in Him.

In inviting men to come and see Christ, it is not to come and see the church, for you may see a church and not see Christ; it is not to see and hear doctrines, for these you may see and hear and not see Christ; it is not to see preachers and officers of the church, for these you may see and not see Christ. It is not to see choirs and congregations, for these you may see and not see Christ; it is not to see Bibles and ordinances, for these you may see and not see Christ. It is an invitation to come and see Christ. To see His life, His heart, His wisdom, His mercy, His love and to taste of Him by soul touch and know that He is God.

If you see Him thus, will you not accept Him, and follow Him? By so doing you will make the discovery that Andrew made; you will find Him whom Andrew found; and you will find in the uncounted age of eternity that in finding Jesus, you made the greatest discovery of your life. The discovery that brought the greatest joy to your soul, and the highest blessings to your life.

THE POSSIBILITIES OF LIFE

Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?—JOHN 1: 46.

JESUS called Philip to follow Him and "Philip findeth Nathanael and saith unto him, We have found Him of whom Moses, in the law and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see."

Very little is said of Nathanael in the New Testament. He is supposed to have had two names, "Nathanael" and "Bartholomew." The evangelists who mention Nathanael do not mention Bartholomew, and those who mention Bartholomew do not mention Nathanael.

Nathanael was from Cana of Galilee, a town about ten miles from Nazareth. The question he asks of Philip makes it appear as if he was prejudiced against Nazareth, and shared the opinion that no prophet should arise out of Galilee. He might have known that Jonah, Hosea, Nahum, and probably Elijah, Elisha, and Amos were of Galilee. This prejudice may have arisen from the common rivalry that often exists between towns adjacent one to the other.

The city of Nazareth has been generally considered as a secluded and contemptible place. But Dr. Merrill, in a little volume entitled *Galilee in the Time of*

Christ, has sought to disprove this view. In studying the life of Christ, we generally view the spiritual side, but much may be gained by studying His life from the viewpoint of His early associations and environments with the people where He lived and the race to which He belonged. Nazareth was a city of Galilee. The province of Galilee covered the main portion of the territory occupied by tribes of Asher, Naphtali, Zebulun and Issachar. When this division took place, according to Josephus, there were sixty cities in Galilee mentioned by name; and two hundred and four cities and villages. Josephus mentions the names of forty of the cities and says that nineteen were fortified; there were ten more cities and towns bordering on the sea of Tiberias. This province of Galilee contained about two thousand square miles with a population of at least three million people.

The soil was so fertile that it was called "the unparalleled garden of God," producing fruits renowned for their wonderful sweetness. Here flourished the grape, the olive, the fig, the citron, the melon and the pomegranate; of trees, there grew the oak, the cedar, the balsam, the sycamore, the pine, and the bay tree. There were many varieties of flowers of wonderful beauty that filled the air with their fragrance.

The waters of Galilee consisted of many springs, fountains, brooks; beautiful Lake Meron, the Sea of Galilee and the upper half of the Jordan, with its sources and floods.

The people who inhabited this province were thoroughly Jewish, with a sprinkling of Grecian and Roman influence. They were mostly engaged in agricultural and mercantile pursuits; with some, labouring as mechanics, and some fishermen, like Andrew and

Peter and James and John. The inhabitants were noted for their patriotism, their physical courage, moral bravery, their respect for law and order, and their devotion to the synagogue worship. Jesus grew up amongst this industrious, enterprising people possessed with healthy bodies and vigorous minds and devoted to their national ideals and religion. Here, in the heart of this province in the city of Nazareth, Jesus spent most of His life. Nazareth is built on the slope of the hill extending far down into the valley below. He must have followed the common instinct of humanity by climbing these accessible hills that rise above Nazareth, the summit of which stands six hundred feet above the level of the sea and about five hundred feet above the valley below. The view from this point is beautiful, rich and lovely. Here, doubtless, He often stood watching the flight of the eagles and pelicans and other birds as they winged their way from the streams of Kishon to the lake of Galilee. To the north He could see fertile plains and the city of Safed—"the city set on a hill," and on beyond, the snow-capped Mt. Hermon. To the east, He could see the rounded dome of Tabor, clothed with oak and terebinth, and beyond that, the Sea of Galilee rocked in its mountain cradle. To the west He could see the purple ridge of Carmel where Elijah found a home, and from one of its spurs called down fire from heaven to lick up the altar and its contents; and on beyond Haifa, with a dazzling line of sand dunes that framed the coast of the Mediterranean, that was often covered with white-caps and the sails of the ships of Chittim. Southward, He could see the graceful lines of Gilboa and the plain of Esdraelon, so memorable in the history of the world.

Farrar beautifully describes the situation. "The standards of Rome were planted on the plain before Him; the language of Greece was spoken in the towns below. And however peaceful it then might look, green as a pavement of emeralds, rich with its gleams of vivid sunlight, and the purpling shadows which floated over it from the clouds of the latter rain, it had been for centuries a battlefield of nations. Pharaohs and Ptolemies, Emirs and Arsacids, Judges and Consuls, had all contended for the mastery of that smiling tract. It had glistened with the lances of the Amalekites; it had trembled under the chariot-wheels of Sesostris; it had echoed the twanging bow-strings of Sennacherib; it had clashed with the broadswords of Rome; it was destined hereafter to ring with the battle-cry of the Crusaders, and thunder with the artillery of England and of France. In that Plain of Jezreel, Europe and Asia, Judaism and Heathenism, Barbarism and Civilization, the Old and the New Covenant, the history of the past and the hopes of the present, seemed all to meet. No scene of deeper significance for the destinies of humanity could possibly have arrested the Saviour's gaze."

To His feet He could see the flat-roofed houses and streets of Galilee; His eye resting upon the Synagogue and the house of the village carpenter. And I wonder if He did not look far beyond and see His agony in the garden, the mockings and scourgings, the cross, and the crown of thorns.

These early environments, associations and scenes with which Jesus became so familiar, were used to illustrate the great truths of the Kingdom of Heaven when He was preaching the Gospel throughout the Holy Land.

Turning to the question of Nathanael, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" It may have been prompted by way of contrast to the more important cities of Jerusalem and Tiberias. The city not being mentioned in the Old Testament may have surprised Nathanael when Philip declared that He came from Nazareth. Nathanael may have become more surprised to hear that the Messiah was a carpenter's son. In order to convince Nathanael, Philip said, "Come and see." To see Him is to believe in Him. To know Him is the best evidence that can be adduced.

Reasoning is very well, but personal experience is far better. Many are indifferent who know Him not. A study of the record of His earthly ministry will reveal His life and character of wonderful interest. A study of the Gospels will convince any reasonable man that he is in contact with a being unrivalled in human history, of a deep spiritual nature, profound in moral teachings, and of self-sacrificing benevolence. The study of His character, His claims and His work will convince those who "come and see" of His divine nature and authority. It will convince them that "never a man spake like this man," and will constrain them to confess, as did Nathanael, "Thou art the son of God, thou art the King of Israel."

Nathanael's confession. This confession of Nathanael, "Rabbi, thou art the King of Israel," is the confession of the Early Church. Simon Peter made a similar confession near the coast of Cæsarea Philippi when Jesus said, "Whom do ye say that I am," and Simon said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This confession contains the essence of a man's faith. It is upon this fact that the Church is

built and the apostles made it the very substance of their preaching. The reply of Jesus to Nathanael is worthy of comment.

"Thou art an Israelite indeed." Christ, having satisfied Nathanael and won from him his confession, now speaks words of welcome to this Israelite. He refers, no doubt, to the old story of Jacob's when his name was changed to "Israel." The name "Jacob" meant "Supplanter," the name "Israel," "a prince," for the power of God has prevailed. So this man Nathanael is an Israelite indeed, one who has prevailed, one in whom there is no guile, not indeed free from sin, but of good character, anxious to be holy and to receive Christ, one whose conscience is undefiled and whose heart is submitted to the will of God. An Israelite, not in name only, but an Israelite in deed and in truth. No guile of intellect, no guile of heart, no guile of conduct. Guile is often a mental evil; but still worse a secret vice of the heart. But Jesus pierces the inmost soul and finds Nathanael an Israelite indeed without guile. Happy is the Christian who can receive such words of commendation from our Lord and Saviour.

Opposition and prejudice to the Gospel invitation. To those who would act the part of Philip in inviting their friends and acquaintances to come to Jesus, they may find some opposition of various kinds. They may hear, "I am busy getting my daily bread and have not time for spiritual concern." Again they may hear, "I am doing the best I can; my religion is to be fair in my dealings and to keep on good terms with my neighbours." Again they may hear, "I care not for the doctrines of the Gospel, I prefer to practice it." But in most cases like that of Nathanael, it is the mat-

ter of prejudice; this is an objection hard to overcome. A man who is prejudiced against a fellow-man will never see a pure motive, or a pure deed, and will always give a twist to the best life. Take prejudice against a preacher; though he may give his life to prayer and good service, yet the man of prejudice will hear blasphemy in his prayers and hypocrisy in his appeals. Prejudice is a Satan without a figure, a coal fire hidden under the guise of respectability. The man possessed of prejudice will never give credit for a good deed to the man he dislikes. Beware of prejudice, you may not be able to overcome it, but hate it with all your heart. The best way to drown it is to take it to Jesus, and He will change the narrow-minded, prejudiced character to one that is noble and magnanimous.

Can anything good come out of Nazareth? If this question is to reflect upon the good name of the people of the city, then it suggests a valuable lesson to us. Nazareth may have a bad name with inhabitants uncultivated, and with a reputation abroad that would hamper and hinder their community life. But something good did come out of Nazareth. Someone came out of Nazareth that taught and lived and served and blessed humanity. Abraham, the father of the faithful, came from Ur of Chaldea. Joseph came from the prison to be the premier of Egypt. Moses came from the bullrushes to become the Lawgiver of Israel. Elisha came from the farm to become a prophet of Israel. Daniel came from the captivity to become the prime minister under three kings. Andrew and Peter, James and John came from the nets of the fishermen to become fishers of men. Matthew came from being a tax collector and publican to write the biography of Christ. Saul came from the tent-making

occupation to become the great apostle to the Gentiles. Abraham Lincoln came from a log cabin to become the emancipator of the slaves. Garfield came from the hut to become a College President and President of the United States. David Livingstone came from being a "piecer" in a cotton factory to become a missionary to Africa, there to build houses, teach schools, make explorations and to call upon all the world to heal the sores of that benighted land. In the marts of trade, Wanamaker, the merchant prince, began by selling needles and pins on the street. A. T. Stewart began by selling candy at a penny a stick. Cornelius Vanderbilt began as a truckster. The Studebaker Brothers began as blacksmiths. These men found the possibilities they possessed and the opportunity to assert them. The American Foreign Missionary Society began in a prayer-meeting. The first Sunday-school began in a cobbler's shop. The first Christian Endeavour Society began in a little church in New England. Some of the greatest organizations had obscure beginnings and have developed into mighty instrumentalities for the amelioration of the human race.

Jesus sees and knows the possibilities in man. It is recorded of the Master that as "he passed by the receipt of customs, he saw a man." Others had passed and had seen the same man, but did not see in him what Jesus saw. It was Matthew the publican and tax collector. His Jewish brethren hated him because of his employment and saw no good in him. Jesus could have found many reasons for passing him by, but He saw good in him. He saw the possibilities in him of manhood, of noble character, of wonderful service. Jesus called him to follow Him, and Matthew

found a permanent place in the life of the Church, and today we read his story of the Life of Jesus. Thank God that Jesus saw the possibilities in Matthew when He passed the customs house.

The possibilities of prayer. Did you ever think of the possibilities in prayer? Those who know it and believe it and use it have a boundless recourse in times of trouble, trial, temptation and grief. Abraham, Jacob, David, Daniel and Elijah knew of the possibilities of prayer and their prayers prevailed with God. The Early Church knew the power and possibilities of prayer and God heard and answered their prayers. Paul knew of its power and possibilities and God gave him grace for every time of need.

The possibilities of faith. Did you ever think of the possibilities of faith? Jesus said, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." Christ made it a condition of being saved and healed. Jesus made mention of its possibilities when He said, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, remove hence to yonder place and it shall remove." Faith is a condition attached to high achievements and it is on the human side and not the divine. It is a power at our disposal beyond anything we can conceive. Science is a great believer, it lives by faith that almost anything can be done; it refuses to limit possibilities; it has grappled with the forces that have barred its progress; it is obeying God's command to have dominion over the earth. More and more this dominion is being asserted over the earth, the air and the water. Nothing impedes the triumphal march of science, but when we come to the realm of the spirit, we submit to conditions and circumstances as if we were limited and had no recourse

to faith. If we could read the story of faith, we would find it did more than stop the lion's mouth, quench the violence of fire, blunt the sharp edge of the sword, subdue armies and surmount obstacles.

Men and women who have faith in themselves have overcome what they have undertaken. They conquer who believe they can conquer. All things are possible to him who believes in his fellow-men. It is faith that wins battles and not big battalions. Cromwell and Nelson won victories because they had faith in their men and their cause. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." If men and women have won victories by faith in themselves and their fellow-men, what could they not accomplish by having faith in Christ? Faith in Christ will save, will heal, will deliver from temptation, will comfort in sorrow. It will change customs, will make the weak strong, will bring victory, will do great things, glorious things, will give a foretaste of heaven and the good age to come.

In conclusion: *Did you ever think of the possibilities of preaching?* It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men and the weakness of God is stronger than men. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called" (1 Cor. 1: 27, 28, 29). "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence." The preacher, in the sight of

many, is a weak man, and yet considering his calling and service he is the strong man of history. "How shall they be saved without a preacher?" It is through preaching of the faith once delivered to the saints that the world will be saved.

These things being true, let us seek more and more to discover the possibilities in our own souls and those of others and let us use the means that will help to develop these possibilities and let us embrace every opportunity to assert them. Let us act on the principle that some good did come out of Nazareth. Let us believe we are here for a purpose and let us keep that purpose steadfastly in our minds, live by it by day, dream over it by night, make it the star of hope, and press on until the prize is won.

THE ONLY HOPE OF THE WORLD

Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."—JOHN 6: 68.

DURING Christ's earthly ministry many followed Him for material advantages and political ends. Great crowds surrounded Him, some to be healed, some to be fed, some out of curiosity, hoping to see Jesus perform a great miracle, and some were politically inclined, hoping He would declare Himself to be a king and would come in collision with the Roman authorities. They lost sight of the real purpose of Christ's coming. It became necessary to sift the crowds that pressed upon Him ever seeking the bread that perisheth and losing sight of the bread of everlasting life. When the multitude learned the real purpose of His coming and that His kingdom was a spiritual one, many went away—went back to their former occupations and to their false teachers and guides. Jesus, turning to His disciples, said, "Will ye also go away?" He held the way open for His disciples to go, thus showing the sovereignty of the will; not desiring to interfere with their freedom to go or to remain; He left it wholly with them to decide for themselves. It would appear that He preferred a small company of true believers who thought more of spiritual things, than to have a large company who sought the loaves and the fishes.

There are many desertions today. Some who go away from Christ are represented by the seed that fell by the wayside and the fowls of the air picked it up; others by the seed that fell in thorny places and was choked; others by the seed that fell on rocky ground and found but little or no root. There are formal adherents who are unable to resist the attractions of the world and turn back like Lot's wife. Some find intellectual difficulties involving mysteries they cannot explain, and so turn back to the world; some turn away because Christ's ideals are too lofty, and cannot be realized; His religion too profound, and cannot be understood; His hope too far in the future, and not promising immediate results. Some follow Him afar off and thus fall away; some, like Demas, go back to the present evil world; such followers have never really known Christ; they have not tasted of the heavenly gift and been partakers of that higher spiritual life. They have missed the real Christian religion that follows faith in Christ, life in service, and hope on wings. Such have never fully understood Christ and been willing to stand His testing and to graduate in the school of knowledge and wisdom, growth and service.

Our human nature causes us to make so many mistakes; our associates subject us to so many temptations; our living in a world so full of enticing attractions; our burdens are so heavy; our sorrows are so deep; our ignorance so stupendous; our questions so many; our sins so shameful; our desire for immortality so inherent in our soul that we feel deeply the need of going to someone who is able to sympathize with us, to help us in time of troubles; to comfort us in sorrow; to forgive our sins; to overlook our

mistakes; to answer our questions; to set before us a perfect ideal and to save our soul from destruction. Therefore, the question asked by Simon Peter is your question and my question. "To whom shall we go"—to satisfy this deep sense of need; this longing for eternal life?

Shall we go to nature? The works of our Creator are filled with glory and with praise of the Maker. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth his handiwork," but if we ask about the guilt and pardon of the soul, if we ask the way of immortality, the resurrection of the dead and eternal life there is no answer.

Shall we go to the worldling? Shall we cast in our lot with those who live for the day in the amusements, interests, and pleasures of the lower world? Shall we smother our fears, our aspirations, and our hopes with the Epicureans and live in the creed of materialism, to eat, drink and make merry for tomorrow we die? Multitudes are thus striving to drown their hopes and aspirations in the cup of pleasure and riot; and thus many turn away from Jesus of Nazareth and the congregation of the righteous for a diet of husks and sawdust.

Shall we have recourse to infidelity? Shall we go to that unbelief that throws doubt upon a future state and promises annihilation of the soul of man with all of its high aspirations, boundless capacity, and possibilities of everlasting life, joy and service? Shall we turn to this darkness that laughs at the hopes of the Christian, spurns the promises held out by Christ, makes light of prayer, and professes to sport with death, judgment and the future world?

Shall we go to the scientist? What promise shall

we have in scientific research? We may join with the eminent professors in the study of the great book of the earth, the fire book of the universe, and turn over their pages and interpret their writings; we may seek to explain their mysteries and to solve their problems, but after all this has been done our hearts have not been touched; we have addressed the intellect but not the springs that are deeper in life; we have not touched the soul that yearns for eternal life; we have not found the handkerchief to wipe away our tears; we have found no answer to the question of suffering and death; we have found no pardon for our sins. We may find a thousand suns and multiply them by 10,000 and still we have not compassed the firmament; we may find other firmaments stretching in boundless space one above the other; we may hear the atheistic scientist say they came by chance and are only glittering lights, but this search does not satisfy the soul in turning away from Him who said, "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you."

Shall we go to Judaism? In such a search we would be turning backward and find ourselves lingering and waiting for the coming of the morning; we would be surrounded with types and sacrifices and mysteries. We would be under the thunderings of Sinai and subjected to the Mosaic law which none could keep; we would be placing ourselves again under the school-master whose business it was to lead us to Christ, who has been marching with stately steps across the history of the human world for nearly two thousand years.

Shall we have recourse to other religions? What man living in the light of the twentieth century under the influences of Christianity would think of turning

to Buddhism, a religion of despair that takes away our God the Father and Creator of man; or to Confucianism that calls to the worship of ancestors no more worthy of worship than our contemporaries; or to Mohammedism with its false prophet and lustful promises; or to Brahminism with its multitudes of Gods; or to Mormonism with its polygamous doctrines; or to Zoroastrianism with evil raised to the level of good. Who would think of leaving Christ with His light and love to enter the region of darkness and despair and death, of these man-made religions?

Shall we go to the self-righteous? The moralist may boast of his morality, but will good works save a man from sin? Can a man escape judgment by the deeds of the law? Dare man make himself his own standard of excellence? Shall man turn away from the Christian ideals of relationship to God and man and look to himself with his faults and appetites, his petty tastes and low ideals as a substitute for Christian ideals and service? The man who follows his own pathway will find it curving farther and farther away till it will end in disappointment and death.

Shall we go to the creeds? Shall we turn from Christ to the observance of forms and ceremonies? Is there salvation in any creed of Christendom? Is there any promise of eternal life in ritualism? Shall we turn away from God who is worshipped in "Spirit and Truth" to the outward observance of religious forms that have no promise of rest for the soul and of eternal life?

Shall we go to the deist? What will he give us? Only a hard and rigid law like the gods worshipped by pagans and the statues worshipped in olden times. What answer could the deist give to us in search for

eternal life? What strength could he give us in the hour of temptation? What hope could he give in the hour of death?

Shall we betake ourselves to penances? To subjecting our souls to sacrifices and punishments? Will Christ forgive through these? Will fasting and penances and tears and mortifications help? Have we not heard "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams?" Eternal life cannot be obtained through outward penances and mortification, nor by long journeys to shrines and temples, nor by crawlings and bowings before crosses, images and shrines.

In these substitutes for Christianity we could find no hope of eternal life, we would be turning to blind teachers who teach the blind. It would be a poor compensation to leave Christ for any of these religious delusions. It is an easy matter to destroy, to tear down, to undermine by skeptical objections and plausible theories, but when the house is torn down, what next? If we go away from Christ, what shall we have instead? It is easier to tempt a man than to save him; easier to ruin life than prepare it for heaven; easier to make money than to save it. If we go away from Christ to whom shall we go? If we give up Christianity, what shall take its place? If we give up the living, loving, personal Saviour, to whom shall we go? If we give up the mystery of God, and turn away, we turn to the greater mystery of godliness. If we give up the account of creation and turn to chance, we turn to a fool's account. A coat could not make itself; the earth could not create itself; your coat had a maker, dare you say your soul had none? The piano was fashioned by a skilled hand, dare you say the voice of man, the sweetest of all music, came by

chance? Who can believe such absurdities? If you give up God are you prepared to take the consequences that are sure to follow? If you give up Christ, when trouble comes, who will help you; when storms come, who will shelter you; when sorrows come, who will comfort you; when the gates of death open before you, who will point you to a glorious immortality? If you give up the future life as viewed from the Christian standpoint, what will you receive in return? If you surrender this hope, whither shall you go?

If we give up our only hope in death, what shall we have as compensation? The case ought to be clear; Christ tells us death is not the end of life; He promises us higher engagements and divine delights beyond; He promises immortal fellowship and glorious reunion; He promises us a cloudless vision and perfect character. If we give up this hope in the future, what shall we have in return? The inquiry is one of common sense.

If we give up the Bible that contains the revelation from God, with salvation for its message, Christ the object of belief; heaven as its hope, what shall we receive in return? If we throw overboard the pilot, destroy the compass and ruin the chart, who will guide our frail bark across the sea into the harbour beyond? Are we to throw away the Bible that teaches us "the Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want," and allow the tempter to say, "Be your own shepherd?" Are we to give up the Bible that teaches us "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble," and in turn try to dry our own tears and make a mock of God? The Bible says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Shall we turn away from Christ and seek rest in the

wilderness, and there lie down on thorns and pillow our heads upon rocks?

Our soul is ever raising questions and proposing problems hard to solve. These questions have been asked from time immemorial—questions about the life here and life hereafter; questions about the body, mind and spirit; questions about the relationship of man to God; questions of suffering and sorrow, of death and eternity. Christ has answered all these questions and if we turn from Him to whom shall we go to find the answer? We must go to someone. Christ says "Come unto me." Simon Peter declares there is no one else to whom we can go. We must have ideals and from them draw our inspirations. Christ teaches the loftiest ideals that have ever been presented to man. Ideals that lift and inspire; ideals supported by a perfect example in Christ Himself. Someone said, "Man must swear by his gods." If this be true, the wisest and best of men declare the most perfect example for this life is found in Christ Jesus whom we can follow, reverence, obey and exalt. But beyond and above all this, we go to Christ for salvation—deliverance from sin and its pollutions. He invites us to come under all circumstances and conditions of life, and what a group of pressing and vexing circumstances surround us. Poverty and sickness, lingering ill health, disappointed hopes, failure to reach the goal; inability to keep our promises and to pay our vows; the futile efforts in breaking up bad habits and throwing overboard cherished idols; these are some of the pressing influences and others might be multiplied without limit. Now Christ says, come unto me and I will help you; I will deliver you in the day of trouble.

Another desire of the soul is for the forgiveness of

sin, a desire to many that swallows up all other desires; no want of our nature is deeper than the desire to have our hearts cleansed of sin and to have the idols of envy, revenge, jealousy and intemperance cast out and the soul washed and made whiter than snow. To whom shall we go for forgiveness but to Christ, for in Him there is redemption, even the forgiveness of sin?

Another want of the soul is the desire to have someone help us to conquer death. Men are kept in bondage through fear of death. This shadowy monster is always cast before us; it comes in season of danger and sickness; it comes on all sides, striking down friend and foe, old and young. We may forget him in health, we may lock him out when at work, we may trample upon him during pleasure, but that grim monster is just outside the door, ever threatening to strike us down, suddenly, or by lingering sickness. Jesus promises if we come unto Him, He will deliver us from this bondage. The writer to the Hebrews declares that He took upon Himself our nature that He might save us from the fear of death and deliver us from this awful monster that haunts humanity.

Another inwrought desire of the heart is for eternal life. Simon Peter said to Christ, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." What is eternal life? It is existence beyond the grave in a state of felicity forever and ever. It is the future existence of the soul that does not die with the body, neither is destroyed, nor sleeps, but enters upon another world where it lives and acts in a region of bliss. It implies the resurrection of the body as revealed in the Scriptures that shall be a glorified vessel inhabited by a glorified spirit. "Thou hast the words of eternal life." Christ taught the life to come. In the words of Saint Peter, "To

whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." It would be hopeless to look for eternal life through any other person. Jesus taught the certainty of the future life; He spoke of it with as much familiarity as He spoke of the present. It is taught in the Scriptures by many different expressions; it is spoken of as "eternal life," "everlasting life," as an "eternal weight of glory," "an eternal inheritance," and "eternal redemption." He speaks of the righteous going into "life eternal." He speaks of "eternal damnation" of the wicked, and of "eternal fire" and "everlasting destruction." "The gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus." We are told to "know Christ, whom to know is life everlasting." To know Him, to know His words, His ideals, His doctrines, His promises that provoke thought, we can believe with our hearts, that will lead us to that knowledge and acceptance of Christ that will supply the need of our souls, the forgiveness of our sins, and satisfy the yearnings for immortality that none other can give. We are exhorted to "lay hold on eternal life." This is a strong expression and it implies that we should grasp it firmly and hold on to it as the only source of safety, as a drowning man would hold on to the rope cast to save him; hold on to it as the one and only hope that can save the soul from sinking into destruction and be lost forever. It may be necessary to let loose of some other things in order to lay hold on eternal life. A child dropped its coin in the milk bottle and put its little hand in to pick out the coin, but when its hand was closed over the coin it could not withdraw it from the bottle; so it is in order to lay hold on eternal life we may be required to let go of some earthly things or be held fast forever.

Could you number those who have gone to Christ for pardon, help, comfort and eternal life, I think you would be willing to cast your lot in with them.

Amongst the astronomers who are numbered with those who have gone to Christ: Copernicus, Kepler, Newton, Mitchell and Herschel.

Kepler said, "I am thinking the thoughts of God. I am overawed with the sense of His majesty. In the firmament, God is passing before me in His grandeur."

Herschel said, "All human discoveries seem to be made only for the purpose of confirming, more and more strongly, the truths contained in the sacred Scriptures."

Mitchell said, "The Bible furnishes the only fitting vehicle to express the thoughts that overwhelm us when contemplating the stellar universe."

Amongst the philosophers who have gone to Christ: Bacon, Locke, Newton, Johnson, Edwards; it was Newton who said, "Christianity is the sublimest philosophy."

Are great statesmen Christians: Henry, Clay, Webster, Burke, Everett, Gladstone and Seward.

Patrick Henry said, "There is a book worth all other books which were ever printed."

Henry Clay said, "I always have had, and always shall have, a profound regard for Christianity, the religion of my fathers, and for its rights, its usages and observances."

Wm. H. Seward said, "Human society never has attained and never can attain a high state of intelligence, virtue, security, liberty and happiness without the Holy Scriptures."

Burke said, "I have read the Bible morning, noon and night and have been the happier for reading it."

Edward Everett said, "If it were possible to annihilate the Bible and with it all its influences we should destroy with it the whole spiritual system of the moral world with our great moral ideas, refinement of manners, constitutional government, security of property, our schools, hospitals, benevolent institutions, the press, fine arts and blessings of the fireside."

Daniel Webster said, "From the time that at mother's feet, or at my father's knee, I first learned to lisp verses from the sacred writings, they have been my daily study and vigilant contemplation. If there be anything in my styles or thoughts to be commended, the credit is due to my kind parents in instilling into my mind an early love of the Scriptures."

Gladstone said, "Talk about the questions of the day, there is but one question, and that is the Gospel. It can and will correct everything needing correction. All men at the head of great movements are Christian men. During the many years I was in the Cabinet, I was brought into association with sixty master minds and all but five of them were Christian. My only hope for the world is in bringing the human minds into contact with Divine Revelation."

Have the great historians gone to Christ? Study the life and works of Green, Ridpath, Bancroft, Thomas Carlyle. It was Carlyle who said, "A noble book! All men's book. It is our first statement of the never-ending problem of man's destiny and God's way with men on earth."

Have the great classical poets been to Christ: Shakespeare, Milton, Tennyson, Longfellow, Browning, Coleridge, Scott, Victor Hugo? The latter said, "It is the supreme certainty of my reason, as it is the supreme consolation of my soul."

“Read to me,” said Scott to his son-in-law. “What book shall I read to you?” said Lockhart. “There is but one book—the Bible,” said Scott.

Coleridge said, “I know the Bible is inspired because it finds me at greater depths of my being than any other book.”

How about the great discoverers who have gone to Christ? Men like Raleigh, Columbus, Livingstone, Peary.

How about the great jurists like Blackstone, Hale, and Black? It was Jerry Black who said, “It is the will of God that we obey Christ for the salvation of our souls.”

How about the great reformers like Huss, Wycliff, Luther, Campbell and hosts of others? I like their company and am willing to cast my lot in with them. I am willing to travel with this company of great men who have gone to Christ for pardon, help and Eternal Life.

Eternity. What an awful word. It has been likened to a ring that has no beginning and no end. It resembles the scene presented to the mariner when far out at sea; he looks abroad and sees nothing but the mighty ocean. Eternal life, who can surpass it? Eternity includes duration beyond calculation of figures; if you would add all the grains of sand of the seashore, to all the drops of water in the ocean, to all the leaves upon the trees, and let them represent centuries of time, the myriads of ages would pass on beyond this calculation and eternity would be no nearer the end than at first. What is included in this promise of eternal life; do you love a home? There are many mansions beyond the skies. Do you love society? There is a perfect society in heaven. Do

you love the Church of Christ? That Church yonder is blameless and without spot. Do you love a perfect character? The character in heaven is that of just spirits made perfect. Do you love music? There are anthems sung by an angelic choir. Do you love light? Christ in the midst of the throne is the light for all. Do you love the city? Many glorious things are spoken of the city of God. Do you love the realization of bliss? Faith has its full fruition and hope its full realization. Do you love worship? You can bow down with prophets, apostles, and angels and worship before the throne of God. Do you love the fullness of joy? There is fullness of joy in the presence of Christ and at His right hand forevermore; your cup shall be running over. Do you love Christ where you can see Him only by faith? Yonder you can see Him face to face and be with Him forevermore.

In conclusion, if any are thinking of going away from Christ, consider carefully where you contemplate going, and to whom you are going. Better ask God to open your eyes that you may see your condition before you leave Christ. Better ask Him to have mercy on your soul; better begin anew your relations with Christ. Remember, you are a creature of two worlds, the one here and the other yonder. It requires two summers to grow the hollyhock, the first summer produces the stalk, the second the bloom, and so it requires two worlds for the existence of man and his completion. The one the school season, the other the graduation season, the one a world of time, the other an eternity; one here and one hereafter.

Let all who are with Christ be thankful, take courage and rejoice. He has the words of eternal life, He taught eternal life, He promised eternal life, He gave

His life that we might have eternal life. He promised to give us life more abundantly, to give us an ideal life, a lofty life, a life of love, an eternal life. Millions testify that He is the author of life, the giver of life, and that all that cling to Him in faith and loving service will be abundantly satisfied. Then let us go to Him because He is supremely excellent; go to Him because He is the Son of God; go to Him because He has the highest gifts to bestow; go to Him because He is not slack concerning His promises; go to Him in the hour of sorrow for comfort; in the hour of trouble for deliverance; in the hour of temptation for grace to overcome; in the time of soul-hunger for the bread of heaven; in the time of soul-thirst for the water of eternal life; in the hour of darkness for light; in the approach of death as the only hope of deliverance; yes, go to Him for the forgiveness of sins; go to Him for life—life most gracious, life most abundant, life in the best service, life in the highest purpose, life eternal, perpetual life, continuous life where there is no pain, nor sickness, nor sorrow, nor separation, nor death.

THE FAITH OF GREAT MEN

Have any of the rulers of the Pharisees believed on Him?

—JOHN 7: 48.

IN this sermon I shall consider the claim of sceptics that many of the great men of the world do not believe in the Divinity of Jesus Christ. They proceed on the assumption that learned and powerful men are likely to be right upon questions of religion and that faith in Christ is a weakness to which they are superior. Against such a fallacy that has led some astray it is well to be on guard and to show the truth about the faith of the men who have cast shadows that have made history.

As this claim appears under various forms, for the sake of convenience, I shall consider the subject in the following order:

- (1) The majority of church members are poor.
- (2) The majority of church members are females.
- (3) Great men are not Christians.

It was neither the first nor last time when judges in whom public confidence was placed were wrong, and the poor and the uneducated were right.

The majority of church members are poor. We are told in the Bible that "the common people heard him gladly;" "the poor had the gospel preached unto them;" "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called." If we were to

judge from these passages, it would appear that the Gospel was intended mainly for the poor, but we must remember that when Christ and His apostles began to preach, the great men were committed politically, socially and religiously to the established worship. They had more to unlearn than the poor, because they were in condition to receive the new religion. Many of them looked with indifference and contempt on the religions of their respective countries, and consequently were not likely to entertain much respect for a new religion. For this reason many of them rejected Christianity without giving it an examination. Their greatness placed them in circumstances which blinded their eyes to a revelation from heaven. Any person who will read the New Testament carefully and candidly cannot fail to arrive at the conclusion that the Gospel was intended for the rich as well as for the poor. There are as many passages directed to the rich as to the poor. In the time of Christ and the apostles there were some rich and learned who believed on Him. There was Joseph of Arimathea, Zacchæus, Cornelius, and the centurions, members of Cæsar's household, relatives of the governor, men of authority, librarians, priests, etc. Christ is no respecter of persons. The Gospel—its invitations, precepts, promises and blessings are for the rich as well as for the poor. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, male nor female, rich nor poor, learned nor ignorant, for all are one in Christ Jesus. If more of the poor have believed on Him, it is because they constitute the majority of the population. However, the ranks of Christians are well represented from all classes of society.

The majority of church members are females. Ac-

cording to statistics sixty per cent of Christians are females, but this is no indication that the mental strength is all on the side of the men and the weakness all on the side of the women. Men are guilty of profanity; women are almost free from it. Is this an evidence of men's greatness and women's weakness? Drunkenness, forgery, theft, licentiousness and murder, are mostly confined to men. Is this a proof of man's strength and woman's weakness? There are twenty men in our penitentiaries to one woman. Is this any proof of her frailty? Considering woman's past environments, considering the fact that she has been despoiled of her purity, deprived of her rights and cheated out of her education, does she not compare favourably with man? Considering what women are doing in the cause of temperance, philanthropy, education and religion; considering her advanced position in all great moral reforms; considering her freedom from crimes and sins of which men are guilty, are we not justified in attributing her acceptance of Christianity to her purity instead of her weakness of intellect? Or, may it not be that woman possesses more purity because more of them are Christians? In either event, the argument is in favour of the Christian religion.

Are great men Christians? Great men are either great as actors or thinkers. Let us first consider men who are great as actors.

Business men. Some wealthy business men are not Christians and yet admit the truthfulness and benefits of Christianity. They are not Christians because the press of worldly pursuits has left them little time to bestow upon religion; for this reason they are neither scientists nor Christians. Some are not Christians be-

cause of their illegitimate methods of attaining wealth and their sinful pleasures. Some, because of their ignorance of the subject. In order to become a Christian, they must have some knowledge of the Gospel, receive and meditate upon its truths; this they have not done because they have given their time to business and accustomed their minds to trade. But I question as to whether the majority of the great business men in the United States and England are sceptical. Amongst the wealthy men of this country who have embraced Christianity we can mention Marshall, Brown, Peabody, Cooper, Field, Sage, Vanderbilt, Wanamaker, Rockefeller, Depauw, Depew, Hopkins, Childs, Dodge, Butler, Stanford, and scores of others of national reputation. In every city of our land are wealthy bankers, merchants, capitalists and manufacturers who are believers in Christ. The number of them who are avowed sceptics is considerably less than the number who are avowed Christians. Their wives and children are found in the church and Sunday-school. Their success is such as to show that "righteousness exalteth a nation." It requires but a moment's reflection to convince a person that we owe much of our commercial prosperity to the benign influences of our religion. Christianity teaches the principles of successful trade. "Be not slothful in business; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." "Seest thou a man diligent in his businesses? he shall stand before kings." Integrity is indispensable to successful trade. Honesty is an absolute necessity. Temperance and self-control are requisites to success in business. Christian business men have put in practice their religion and God has blessed them and made them prosperous; they have stood for that righteousness that

exalteth a nation; and while this may refer to spiritual exaltation, who can say it is not also true of commercial exaltation? Our national wealth is constantly increasing. The wealth of the world belongs to Christian nations. Their vessels sail upon every sea and are found in every port; their railroads span the continents; their cable wires cross the deep; their radio messages fill the air; the great industries of the world are in their hands; they are the great money-lenders of the world; they stand first in the mechanical inventions and scientific discoveries that bless humanity. Now to what are we indebted for this power and predominance? Is it our ingenuity? No, for the Chinese are more ingenious. Is it our energy? No, for other nations are as industrious. Ah, are not these commercial victories largely the fruits of Christianity, monuments of her power? By improving society with her principles and light she has created temporal blessings and witnesses in her favour.

The first sentence that was ever flashed along the electric wire in America were the words, "What hath God wrought?" The first words that the electric cable flashed through the dungeons of the deep was the Divine message: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men."

Great thinkers. Great thinkers are often misunderstood. They are frequently in advance of the world in their thinking. There is room for diversity of opinions upon the non-essentials in religion. A man may repudiate, to a considerable extent, the written creed of a church, and still be a Christian. He may hold peculiar views upon some passages of Scripture, and still believe that Jesus is the Christ, and be loyal to Him. When such men arise, old par-

tisans are likely to cry out, "Infidelity." There was a time when the freedom of Locke's speculations caused some people to call him sceptical, but his whole life and works were a living refutation of such a charge.

In 1619, Vanini was burned as an atheist. On being asked at his trial if he believed in God, he picked up a straw from the floor, and showing it to his judges, said: "This straw, if there were nothing else, would constrain me to confess a divine author of nature." A manuscript was once submitted to Kant, in which the author had presumed to institute a parallel between the system of Kant and that of Christ. Kant expressed a religious horror on seeing his name in connection with that of Christ. Begging his friend not to publish the book, he used these memorable words: "One of those names, that before which the heavens bow, is sacred, whilst the other is that of a poor scholar endeavouring to explain to the best of his abilities the teachings of his Saviour." There was a time when Luther was called an atheist. There was a time when Campbell was expelled from a popular communion. Because men have laboured to reform or restate the popular religion, they have been denounced as atheists, and, too, when they indignantly repelled the charge. As cases similar to those mentioned are numerous, it is best to put a more charitable construction upon their motives. History shows that many great men who have been stigmatized as departing from the popular faith have done nothing to warrant the reproach of infidelity. I am constrained to believe that infidels are strongly tempted to make up for popular sympathy by claiming the prestige of great men. James Walker, late president of Harvard, once said to his students:

“I cannot recall a single individual of the highest order of mind, who has set himself in opposition to religion. The active enemies of religion are made up mostly of men ambitious of greatness, but unable to achieve it.”

Great scientists. An examination into the annals of the great inventors and discoverers, authors and founders of those sciences and arts since the dark ages will convince one that the secrets of the Lord are with them that fear Him; that there is an intimate connection between science and the Bible and that most all of the great masters of science were believers in the Bible.

Beginning with Roger Bacon, the doctor of the thirteenth century, and Gioia, the inventor of the mariner's compass, in the fourteenth century, and descending in a direct line to Sir William Thompson, of the twentieth century, you will observe that the great scientists during these five hundred years of remarkable history have been men who have looked through nature to nature's God. Dr. Faust, who invented printing in 1434; Schaffer, who invented metallic type in 1443; Christopher Columbus, who discovered the new continent in 1492; Copernicus, born in 1473, who suggested the elements of the present demonstrative system of the universe; Kepler, born 1671, who greatly advanced the Copernican system by his discoveries; Galileo, born at Pisa in 1564, who discovered the gravity of the air, and invented the pendulum; Descartes, born 1596, who advanced the cause of mathematics and algebra, and became the founder of the Cartesian philosophy; Boyle, born in 1626, the inventor of the air pump; Bacon, born 1561, the founder of the inductive philosophy; Locke, born 1632, the great

mental and moral philosopher; Newton, born 1642, the interpreter and revealer of nature's secrets; Wm. Herschel, the great astronomer, born 1738; James Watt, born 1736, inventor of the steam engine; Robert Fulton, born 1765, the inventor of the steamboat; Sir Humphrey Davy, born 1778, the enlarger and perfecter of the science of chemistry; Sir William Thomson, 1824-1907, one of the most brilliant natural philosophers of the world; Samuel Morse, 1791-1872, inventor of telegraphy; Alexander Graham Bell, born 1847, the inventor of the telephone, are all known to the religious world, as well as to the scientific world, as believers in Christianity and expounders of its doctrines. They saw the charter of supreme intelligence written on every page of creation, providence and redemption. They heard the voice of God speaking from every flower that bloomed, from every cloud that sailed and from every planet that winged its way in the universe.

This lengthy record proves the truthfulness of Lord Bacon's assertion: "It is true that a little philosophy inclines man's mind to atheism, but depths in men's minds bringeth them about to religion."

Great educators. There are over three hundred colleges and universities in the United States, and but few, if any of them, are openly and acknowledged infidel; while there are men in the professions who are sceptical, they are the exception and not the rule. It has been carefully estimated that fully three-fourths of the pupils in our schools and students in our colleges and universities are under the instructions of Christian teachers.

Nearly all of the professors in our schools and colleges are firm believers in the Scriptures, and many

of them are leading defenders of the faith. The late Professor Duncan, who was president of two colleges of no mean reputation, and the author of several books, declares: "It would be an extreme in liberality to concede that one out of twenty of the teachers of the higher branches of education in this country and Europe belong to the class of so-called free-thinkers. By recent canvass it was ascertained that out of fourteen hundred Harvard students who had left that venerable institution within a period of ten years, only two were sceptics. The Christian colleges in the United States are numbered by the hundreds, but where are the infidel colleges? The unbelievers claim wealth and intelligence, but they have neither the heart, nor the benevolence, nor the conviction to establish a solitary college to teach and propagate unbelief. On the other hand, the Christian people of the United States have put a round one hundred million dollars into their institutions of learning for the purpose of influencing and educating young men and women in the ways of the Lord.

When James Russell Lowell returned from abroad there was a dinner given in his honour, and upon that occasion he said: "When the infidels who are now denouncing Christianity can find a spot on the face of the earth where Christianity does not prevail and where they would consent to live or where they would consider life worth living, it will be in order for them to emigrate thither and preach their infidel doctrines."

Great statesmen. All the presidents of the United States have been counted on the side of faith and have pronounced the highest eulogies on the Scriptures. Washington, who was a baptized believer, declared it would be impossible to govern the country without

faith in God. Thomas Jefferson wrote to his namesake advising him to "Adore God, cherish your parents, murmur not at the ways of Providence." It was Benjamin Franklin who introduced in the constitutional convention of 1787, a motion for daily prayers and supported it in the following words: "In the beginning of the contest with England, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily need of prayers in this room for the Divine protection. Our prayers, Sir, were heard; and they were graciously answered—and have we now forgotten that powerful Friend? or do we imagine that we no longer need His assistance? The longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, that God governs in the affairs of men. We have been assured in the sacred writings that 'except the Lord build the house they labour in vain who build it.' I firmly believe this; I, therefore, beg leave to move that henceforth prayers, imploring the assistance of Heaven and its blessings on our deliberations, be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed to business." Andrew Jackson, pointing to the family Bible, said to a friend: "That book is the rock upon which our republic rests." John Adams said: "The Bible is the best book in the world." "There is a book," declared Patrick Henry, "worth all the other books which were ever printed."

Chief Justice Jay gave a Bible to his children as his farewell address. The eminent Webster declared: "Religion is the tie that connects man to his Creator and holds him to His throne. If that tie is sundered, he floats away a worthless atom in the universe." Abraham Lincoln said: "This great Book is the best gift God has given to man. All the good from the Saviour of the world is communicated through this

Book." General Grant urged the citizens of our great republic to "hold fast to the Bible as the sure anchor of our liberties." The lamented Garfield was for years a minister and president of a Christian college. An African prince was sent to Queen Victoria to ascertain from her the secret of England's success. She presented him with a beautifully bound copy of the Bible, and said: "Tell your king that this is the secret of England's greatness." During Gladstone's whole life he was a student of the Bible and a worshipper of Christ.

It would not be difficult to find volumes of such testimony from far-seeing statesmen, renowned authors, great reformers and leading scientists. These statements are introduced to show how untrue are the claims of the sceptics that the great men of the world are on their side. They also testify to the worth of the Scriptures, their majesty, purity and holiness. They also speak in the loudest terms of the civilizing influence of Christianity.

When scoffers or sceptics make such a claim that the great men of the world are not Christians, it may be an opportune time for the Christian to make use of an interrogation point or two. Better frame up a question or two. Ask what makes the difference between China and the United States? What makes the difference between the women of Asia and those of America? Ask what they think about the Sermon on the Mount. What about the golden rule? Ask what they think of the Good Samaritan. Ask if they can name a single triumphant deathbed of an infidel. Ask about the great men just mentioned in this discourse. Ask how he is going to account for the strong faith of such men as John Ruskin, Thomas Carlyle, Macaulay, William Penn, Walter Scott, Charles Kingsley, William Glad-

stone, Horace Bushnell, James A. Garfield, Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, U. S. Grant, Admiral Farragut, John Milton, William Shakespeare, John Adams, Daniel Webster, George Washington, and hundreds of others of the faith. Ask such questions and you will find him embarrassed and hear him say he has an engagement and must go. If a Christian will arm himself with the "Sword of the Spirit" and the record of God's great heroes, he will win the victory.

There is nothing in infidelity to make men great. It is not a person or a thing. It is a moral imbecility; it is a spiritual jaundice; a mere negative; a repudiation of evidence; it is darkness; it is nothing.

Infidelity does nothing to make men great in philanthropy. She has organized no noble charities; she has left this work for the Christian people. Christians take the lead in caring for the deaf, the blind, the lame, the insane. Let infidelity boast of her benevolence and of her seeking to elevate the race. Where are her missionaries enlightening the pagan? What have they done for Japan, China and India? They have founded no schools of learning, nor houses of mercy, nor missionary organizations. But Christian men consecrate their millions to convert the world. Christian men and women have gone into every quarter of the globe to spread the light and truth of their religion. Infidelity has failed to reform the vicious. Where are her reformed drunkards? How many neglected children has she cared for? How many John B. Goughs have they lifted out of the ditch? Ah, she has the torch to destroy, but not the hammer to build. It is left to Christian people to gather into Sunday-schools millions of children and to teach them the importance and salvation of the soul; it is left to them

to comfort the sorrowing, encourage the drooping heart, feed the poor, care for the orphan, minister to the stranger, relieve the suffering, and provide homes and asylums for the unfortunate.

Infidelity does nothing to make men great intellectually. Infidelity cuts off the mind from the great sources of moral truth, and gives nothing substantial in return. While its advocates are labouring to demolish Christianity, they are proposing no other system upon which they can rely. They tell us that our present anchorage is not safe, but they point to no other shelter in time of storm. If our charts are false, they tell us of no true ones upon which we can rely. When they argue that our Pilot is incompetent, they point to no one who is able to guide us safely through the perils of life. Their work is done when they have destroyed the faith and tossed their victims upon a tempestuous ocean of doubt and darkness.

On the other hand, Christianity favours education; it is opposed to narrowness, it assigns the highest place to truth, it stimulates thought, produces issues and proposes questions whose heights can never be scaled and whose depths can never be fathomed. Let the mind study the attributes of God, the mysteries of Revelation, the wonders of redemption, the mission of Christ, and though these questions remain in a measure unsolved, yet the intellect will be promoted and disciplined. Christianity has aroused the mental energies of mankind, and produced a vigorous literature; it is an intellectual luminary pouring its rays into all the regions of thought and every department of human knowledge. The great institutions of learning are in Christian lands. The majority of the great books of the world have been written by Christian men; great

philosophers such as Bacon and Locke, great poets such as Shakespeare, Milton and Tennyson were born within the circle of the Church.

Infidelity does nothing to make men great in morals. It shuts off all the motives to virtue and holiness that come from a future state of rewards and punishments. There is nothing in infidelity to hold the mind from breaking the bounds of morality; it recognizes no divine moral government, no obligations to a Creator; it is not inspired by hope of future rewards, nor restrained by fear of future punishments. It leaves man without feelings of remorse and incapable of being influenced by a guilty conscience. He will thus break over the narrow circle of motives just around him and be hardened against moral considerations, and left to the demoralizing influence of passion and the commission of crime. The effect of such an influence can be seen in one of the most notorious outlaws known in the criminal annals of the West, Frank Rind, who stood in a cell in St. Louis, the very impersonation of crime, and boasted to preachers, policemen, and citizens, that he was a Bob Ingersoll man, and it is certain that every man present believed him.

Infidelity is ruinous to the soul. No matter in what form infidelity is admitted to the mind, it is fatal to the soul. It leaves man without Christ and hope in the world. But Christianity saves the soul; it pardons the sins of man; gives to him the gift of God's Spirit; comfort in the hour of sorrow, and hope of eternal life in the hour of death. In the hour of death, that hour of honesty and truth, what consolation does infidelity afford? What can scepticism do for the soul when it is about to launch into eternity? Hobbes, who could not endure the thought of appearing in the presence

of his Maker, said on the approach of death: "I am taking a fearful leap in the dark." Gibbon acknowledged on his deathbed that all was irrevocably lost. Voltaire died shrieking, "Abandoned by God and man." Tom Paine died, one moment cursing God and the next shrieking for mercy. With what joy do we turn to the deathbed of God's people. David said: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." Paul said, at the approach of death: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." Luther died saying, "O Lord, thou hast redeemed me." Washington said: "I die hard, but all is well." Infidelity abandons its victim in the dying hour and leaves the poor soul to make shipwreck upon the shores of an awful eternity, whereas the dying Christian can, by his faith, see light in the darkness of the tomb, and from above he can hear voices of loved ones calling him heavenward.

If there are any who hear me who are tempted to abandon their faith, consider well into what fellowship you would bring your name and fortune. It would be in connection with men who have an unenviable notoriety; men who have misapplied their gifts; men who began by denying their obligations to God and ended by making a jest of their obligations to their fellow-men; men who are travelling the road that leads to moral ruin and death; men who, with a merciless hand, would take from the human race its principal support in trouble, its great light in darkness, its true dignity of success, its greatest means of civilization, its safeguard in temptation, and leave nothing in its place but feeble men without Christ and hope in the world.

If there are any who hear me who are almost persuaded to become Christians, consider with whom you are about to bring yourselves into communion. You will bring yourselves into communion with the most illustrious names, the brightest ornaments, the greatest benefactors, and foremost men of the world; it will bring you into communion with men to whom the world is indebted for every advance she has made in civilization; men whose benevolent enterprises are in every land diffusing blessings of truth, order and liberty; men who are pledged in a thousand ways to honour, virtue and philanthropy; men who are preparing themselves for communion with just spirits made perfect, angels of light, and the only mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus, our Lord.

THE SINLESSNESS OF CHRIST

Which of you convicteth me of sin?—JOHN 8: 46.

THIS was the challenge that Christ gave to Scribes and Pharisees. With all their questions and faultfinding they could not accuse Him of sin. He challenged them to detect in Him any wrong, any dishonour to God, any indifference to moral standard; He challenged them to convict Him of any violent passion, any pride or vanity, any moral failure. He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh; but not in sinful flesh. He partook of the nature of His Father who was perfect. The challenge that He gave to the Jews of old stands as a challenge to the whole world.

It would be an easy matter to convict the devil of sin, for he is the father of lies, was a liar and murderer from the beginning, possessed of lying propensities, and no truth in him. He is the embodiment of all evil, and the representation of all the forces of unrighteousness and wickedness throughout the earth.

External evidence. All we know about Christ supports the sinlessness of His character. Those who knew Him, walked with Him, talked with Him, dined with Him, declare Him to be sinless; they describe Him as a man moving amongst men without sin. The Apostle Peter says he is "a holy and just one," "who did not sin." John the beloved apostle speaks of Him

as "Jesus Christ the righteous," "in him was no sin." Paul says, "he knew no sin," "without sin." He is our "high priest, holy, harmless and undefiled." "No guile found in him," "the lamb without spot and blemish." "We have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

The marks of weakness, passion, and the thousand infirmities that we notice in other men are nowhere spoken of Christ in the Gospels.

His enemies' view of Him. All ages, including those of His own age who hated Him and denied Him, could not impugn His perfect character. He challenged His deadliest enemies to convict Him of sin. But they could not. It was not from lack of desire, for they were base enough to have ruined Him if they could have found any weak point in His character. There never was a man lifted above the common crowd that was not envied by some and assailed in moral character. Jesus lived in close intercourse with humanity, mingled with publicans and sinners, forgave the wronged woman who washed His feet with her tears, dined with publicans, talked with Samaritans; but none could condemn Him as a sinner. He went in and out amongst them, but did not engage in their sinful practices. The Roman Governor declared that he "found no fault in him," and when they clamored for His blood, Pilate said, "Why what evil hath he done?" To which they responded, we have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself the Son of God. Pilate's wife pronounced Him a "just man;" the Roman Centurion declared he was righteous and the Son of God; the thief on the

Cross said he had done nothing amiss; Judas said he had shed innocent blood. The demons declared Him "the Holy One of Israel;" and the prince of the world could find nothing in Him to condemn Him. Such were the findings of His enemies who were in His presence and who knew Him personally; and all ages ever since have conceded the sinlessness of Christ. Historic criticism has examined His words, life and deeds and have been unable to discover one flaw in that sunbeam of light. The most outspoken of critics have bowed before His perfect character. Rationalists have written books about Him; but not one of them has ever convicted Him of sin. They commend His labours of love, His beautiful character, and declare the reign of His will and power will never end.

The Church considers Him sinless. The New Testament, read in the light of honest investigation, justifies the doctrine of the sinlessness of Christ. His character has ever remained spotless. No matter how high the moral standard rises with the progress of the ages, it will never rise above the ideals of Christ. His moral standard is the goal toward which the race is always advancing. The portrait of Christ as presented in the New Testament stands unique in the sinlessness of His character. The Church has looked into His eyes, watched His footsteps, examined His life and holds as one of the articles of faith, His matchless purity of thought and stainless life. Had there been one evil word, one spot upon His priestly garment, one wrinkle in His kingly robe, one evil disposition of temper, one sinister motive, He could not be our Saviour. His life from His baptism to His ascension has been scrutinized by the ablest of men and they find He broke no commandments and eschewed no evil.

Christ lived in perfect harmony with the truth He taught and the high standards of His ideals. Shakespeare said it was easier to teach twenty men what to do than to be one to do what was taught; but Jesus Christ supported His teaching with His life. There is perfect harmony between His teachings and His life. Did He recommend acts of benevolence? He went about doing good. Did He teach self-denial? He subjected Himself to persecution, crosses and death. Did He preach forgiveness of injuries? He prayed for His murderers. Did He preach communion with God? He spent days and nights in prayer. Did He enjoin resignation to the will of God? He drank the cup in the garden to its very dregs. Did He teach forbearance and longsufferings? He practiced these virtues. In this respect Christ presents a marked contrast with all other men.

Christ claimed to be sinless. By what standard did He judge Himself? What was His conception of sin? Was His sense of sin quick or slow? Sensitive or sluggish? What was His moral standard? Did He not declare to make the tree good in order to have the fruit good? His sensitiveness was of such a character that when a woman pushed her way through the crowd and touched Him He turned and said, "Who touched me?" He saw sin at its source. He went behind the veil and looked at the heart. He knew to make man good there must be a change in the source of evil. He knew the need of regeneration of the heart. He never admitted error; He prayed, yet never confessed any sin; He saw sins in others, but not in Himself; He condemned wickedness in others, but not in Himself. In all His teachings there is not one word of penitence. From men you can hear the cry of weakness and the

confession of sins. David the King admitted his sin and cried for pardon. Paul acknowledged his weakness and inability to do that which he ought to do. Simon Peter confessed that he was a sinful man. The greatest and foremost believers in Christ have acknowledged their defects, confessed their sins; but Christ made no such acknowledgment, for He was sinless. He showed not the least sense of transgression, He made no plea for mercy; He had no weakness to confess. In this respect He stands unapproachable. In this respect He stands on a pedestal on which man never stood. Men have confessed the most heart-breaking shortcomings and failures; but such a cry never escaped the lips of our beloved Lord. Men have gone to the limit to make restitution of wrongs, to undo the evil of their past lives, to make amends for their evil doing; but Jesus Christ never. He did not, because He was sinless. Had He admitted sin, or could sin have been imputed to Him, there would have been no Church of Christ and no salvation for man.

Christ our ideal. The character of our Lord must ever be regarded as our example. An example worthy of our imitation. "I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done unto you;" "learn of me." "A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." He seeks to make His disciples like Himself; a living demonstration for the truth. He would employ His people as the agencies for the diffusion of His life, truth and love. He would make their natures like His own. Having adopted our nature He is entitled to expect that we should follow His example. His sinlessness satisfies a deep want of our soul in the desire for an ideal to be set before us. An

artist in attempting a painting always has an ideal in view. Nations have their ideals. Families have their ideals. Schools of thought have their ideals. These ideals are the test of a man's character and become to man the inspiring spring of his activities. Now Jesus Christ proposed His character as our ideal. Other founders of religion seek to make men better by injunctions that refer to external activities. Such as praying so many times a day, doing penances, making pilgrimages and the like. Not so with our Lord; He comes to our rescue with an encouraging example in Himself. There is a difference between external command and internal reformation. When we imitate Christ it is the imitation of His spirit and life, not merely a copy of a model; it goes to the fountain source and touches the heart, and while we may never attain this high ideal, yet we are always travelling toward it. And though the imitation may give but a faint outline of His image, yet if we follow this example the outline will become more and more marked till the picture of Christ will be discerned by others who may be led to glorify Him.

Christ, being sinless, stands unapproachable. The prophet Isaiah said, "With whom shall we liken him and with whom shall we compare him?" There can be no image made like Christ. His spirit is no longer incased in human flesh. His return to the world was in spirit, truth and righteousness. False gods and idols may be represented in form, but not Christ. He has no likeness in creation; His works are revelations to Himself; but are not more like Him than the machine is like the man who made it. A machine may reveal a man's skill, thought and labour; and so God's handiwork reveals the attributes of God. There is no

likeness of Him in mental creation. Philosophy may have its conceptions of God, but the images of man's thought are only mental creations and cannot fathom the greatness of God. There is no one with whom we can compare Him: Adam lost paradise; Abraham said that which is not true; Jacob abhorred himself; Moses forfeited the Holy Land; David confessed his sins; Isaiah acknowledged his iniquities; the Great Apostle displayed defects in character, and so have all men of all ages who have been honest with themselves; but when we turn to Christ, His voice may challenge the centuries. To whom can we liken Him and with whom can we compare Him? Search the range of all religions of all ages and all nations and His challenge cannot be accepted. When you rise from men in their weakness and sin, to Jesus Christ, He stands pre-eminent. To the prophets He was the hope of Israel; to the apostles He was the Lord of Glory; to the crusader He was the captain of chivalry; to the martyrs He was the chief amongst them; to Fenelon He was the quest of all mystics; to the philosopher He was the most practical of all philosophers; to Shakespeare He was the best man that ever trod the earth; to Cromwell He was the man of war; to Luther He was the greatest of all reformers; to Wesley He was the spiritual Saviour; to Howard He was the sufferer for the innocent; to Mary of Magdala He was the purest of men; to the little children He was as an affectionate father; to the Church in general He stands matchless in His sinlessness, and the revelation of God's word, the manifestation of God's love, the expression of God's glory and the voice of God in revealing His will to man.

This sinless Christ has risen in the world as the

great spiritual Leader and Saviour of men. The effect of His life and salvation is bearing fruit and bids fair to become universal in its sway. His work amongst men is historical and indisputable. He has branded suicide and exalted the value of life; He has curbed the passion and taught purity; He has punished those guilty of iniquity; He has made a welcome place for children; He has rescued the fallen; He has purified the sports of men; He has driven the shameless iniquities of heathenism into darkness; He has brought a remedy for the wrongs of mankind. No one can describe His work amongst men; it has freed the slave, protected the captive, sheltered the orphan, nursed the sick, shielded the innocent, and elevated womanhood. He has changed vice to a virtue. He has elevated poverty from being a curse into being a means of discipline and grace. By His own labour He has stamped dignity upon labour; He has taught the brotherhood of man and Fatherhood of God. Wherever the Gospel is preached, it blesses the individual soul and moulds in righteousness the individual character. He regenerates the community in which His followers live. He has kept His promises and demonstrated the value and virtue of the beatitudes; in His resurrection He has given promise of a glorious life to come. To His gospel feast He has given an invitation that is world-wide in its scope. He prepared this feast with great love and thought and sacrifice. It is a feast of pardon, reconciliation with God, rest for weary souls, hope for despondent and filling with righteousness those who thirst for communing with God. The king of Babylon invited one thousand lords and their concubines to dine with him; Napoleon invited the Emperors of Europe to dine with him; the King of England invited the am-

bassadors of all nations to dine with him; but lo, here is the King of kings who sends out His servants into the highways and byways to invite the lowly, the out-cast, the downtrodden and the poverty-stricken to come to His feast, as well as those in the highest walks of life.

The invitation is to come to a feast of pardon, peace, love and hope, that if accepted and the conditions of acceptance complied with will cleanse from all sin and make a new creature in the sinless Christ.

THE PRISONER'S QUESTION

Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

—MATTHEW 11: 3; LUKE 7: 19.

THIS question was asked by John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ. John's birth was foretold. His appearance was plain; his garment was made of camel's hair bound around him with a leathern girdle, in striking contrast with the elaborate costumes worn by the priests; his manner of life was austere; his meat was locust and wild honey. Many persons live to eat, but John the Baptist ate to live, in striking contrast to the luxurious living of to-day. His sphere of activity was in the wilderness of Judea, a sparsely populated region. Here, at some distance from the noise and tumult of the city, he began to publish his great messages.

The spirit of his ministry had been typified in the life and labours of Elijah the prophet; there was a striking resemblance in the life of these two great characters; in their boldness of spirit, in their zeal for the glory of God and in their faithfulness in reproving iniquity in high places. His message was worth hearing and was widely advertised. He came at an interesting time in the history of the world. The Emperor of Rome was befouling the throne with lust; Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, was ruling with an iron hand and offending a fanatic people; Caiaphas and Annas were dividing the spoils of the priesthood which

they disgraced. The people had become formal in their worship and were seeking worldly gain and pleasures. In the midst of these people and in these days of expectancy, John came as a voice crying in the wilderness. His message was practical, heart-searching and convicting. The people came to hear from the regions round about. Pharisees and Sadducees, Herodians and Scribes, priests and publicans, soldiers and civilians came. They came from priestly Hebron, from historic Bethlehem, from holy Jerusalem, and from fertile Galilee to hear this strange voice. His words fell like a hammer to break to pieces their stony hearts. He rebuked the priests for their negligence in the performance of duty. He rebuked the soldiers for their violence, the tax collectors for their extortionate methods, the wealthy Pharisees for their formality, the proud Sadducees for their hypocrisy, the masses for their stupidity and indifference. Throngs hung upon his words and listened with accusing conscience as he preached to them repentance and the demands for the fruits of repentance, and baptism for the remission of sins. There was another and startling message—the preparation in heart and life for the coming of the Holy and Just One. The message of the coming of Christ must have been heard with intense interest and stirred the hearts of all who heard it. He declared the coming of One that would be preferred before him, whose shoes he was unworthy to unloose and who would baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

Jesus came from smiling Galilee in the thirtieth year of His age to John to be baptized of him in the Jordan. John was reluctant to perform the holy service, but Jesus said it must be done to fulfil all righteousness. And as He ascended from the waters the heavens were

opened and the Spirit of God descended like a dove upon Him and a voice was heard to say, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

When Jesus returned from the temptation of the wilderness, John saw Him on the banks of the Jordan and he called out, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." What did he mean by the sin of the world? He did not mean the physical world. He must have meant the human world—the human world that had been separated from God by sin, the human world in rebellion against God. John knew the sin of the nation, he knew the wicked life of the rulers of the people; he knew the formalism of the priests; he knew the unreality of the multitude; he knew the sin of the world; he knew the collective evil of mankind from Adam to his day; he knew the sins of people that constituted the sin of the world. He knew the people had forsaken Jehovah and had for themselves broken cisterns that held no water; he knew how the people had forgotten, ignored and denied God. And he openly declared before the multitude that this Jesus of Nazareth was the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. Here is the Messiah of whom Moses and the prophets have spoken. He is walking in your midst, His mission is to take away the sin of the world. He is here to lift your sins and bear them away by His life, His teachings, His sufferings, His resurrection and His abiding presence. He is here to fulfil the prophecies and to glorify God.

Not many months after Jesus began His ministry, John's boldness in preaching against the terrible sin of Herod in living with his brother Philip's wife, brought upon him the wrath of Herod and Herodias. For this bold declaration he was arrested and incarcerated in

the gloomy prison at Machærus. After some months of confinement, he sent a couple of messengers to Jesus, asking the question, "Art thou he that should come or do we look for another?" Why did John ask this question,—“Art thou the Messiah or do we expect another?” John was a relative of Jesus, he had baptized Him, he had seen the Spirit descend upon Him like a dove, he had heard the voice of the Father speak, he had so many evidences that Jesus was the Messiah, and yet he asks this question. Was it for the sake of his disciples, to strengthen their wavering faith, or was it because of his own failing faith and loneliness? Examine the situation in which John was placed; he had been surrounded by multitudes who hung upon his words, and obeyed his mandates, but now he is in the dark and dismal prison of Machærus. He had been there for at least six months; he had heard about the works of Christ; he had received no visits from Jesus to console and sustain him. His long imprisonment was telling on him; he had no work for his heart and energies to support his spirit that had been so strong and courageous. Confined within the strong and gloomy castle with a possibility of an agonizing torture and a treacherous death, he seemed to be neglected by God above and God's Son on earth. I wonder if he did not think in his lonely hours of meditation,—“Why am I, an innocent man, the forerunner of Jesus,—compelled to suffer this imprisonment. Why have I been thus forsaken; why has my mission been so unjustly and abruptly closed? Why should he not call down fire from heaven to consume Herod and Herodias? Why should not the son of David shake the foundation of this prison with a mighty earthquake and bring to me deliverance? Why does He not declare

Himself openly and use His power to eject the Romans, put down sin and introduce a reign of righteousness? I have waited long in this gloomy prison and ere the doubts overcome me and my faith fail me, I must have a word of encouragement from Him whom I have proclaimed as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." Hence the question sent by two of his disciples, "Art thou he that should come, or shall we expect another? Art thou the one of whom Moses and the prophets spoke?" I imagine he said, "Speed your way that I may know the truth of Him of whom I have borne witness."

Jesus receives the deputation, gives audience to them and hears their question, "Art thou the Christ or shall we look for another?" Jesus does not affirm His Messiahship in words as He did to the woman of Samaria and the man born blind, but He adapts His teachings to the circumstances; He lets His deeds speak more convincingly than His words. Glowing descriptions of His claims would not convince like His deeds. Said He in reply, "Go and show John the things which ye hear and see; the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them." And "Blessed is he that is not offended because of me"—not offended at my mission, my teachings, my doctrines or the conditions of my salvation. As much as to say, "These things are my testimony that I came from God and am the Messiah." He was quoting the prophecy contained in the fifth and sixth verses of the thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah. These were signs and evidence sufficient to support His Divine Authority. John's disciples had seen these works with their own eyes—seeing is believing. Such evi-

dence the apostles used as "that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you." They were works of mercy such as might be expected from the Son of God, such as would be used as an attestation of the claim that Jesus was the Messiah. Christ Himself in the flesh is the greatest and most mysterious of all miracles, and yet He was supported by a chain of lesser miracles. Think of them! The blind, like poor Bartimæus, have their eyes opened; the deaf from their mother's womb have their ears unstopped and their tongues loosed; the lame with palsy leap with joy and praise the Lord; the lepers with the most incurable disease are healed; the dead like Lazarus are raised to life. They were miracles to those who witnessed them, but not to Jesus. He swept the whole circle of miracles. There are some men who are specialists and make great ado about being able to do some one thing like healing, but Jesus was no specialist. He had a variety of miracles, blind, deaf, dumb, lame, lepers, dead. He never performed half a miracle; He spoke the word and it was done. There are greater things than what we call miracles. Christianity is the greatest of all miracles; compassion is greater than a miracle; love is greater than a miracle; healing John's doubts is greater than a miracle; forgiving a sinner and registering his name in Heaven is greater than a miracle; transforming the life of a drunkard, a libertine, a worldling is greater than a miracle; cleansing the sinner is greater than cleansing the leper. What Christ has done for humanity during the ages is greater than any miracle or sign or wonder.

The poor had the Gospel preached to them. Isaiah made special mention of this as one of the works of Christ. The Gospel Jesus adapted to the poor. It is

plain and easily understood. So sympathetic that the lowly appreciate it; so full and free that the needy obtain it; so elevating that the meek are exalted by it! so profitable that the destitute are requited by it. Jesus knew that to lift humanity, He had to preach to the poor as well as to the rich and the great. No heathen teacher of Rome, Athens, Alexandria or the East had ever cared to make the poor the object of their teaching; the rabbis cared nothing for them; the rich sent presents to the rich to obtain their favour, but the Lord has presents for all—kings, noblemen, generals of armies. Most priests and rich men cared nothing for the poor except in so far as they fought their battles, obeyed their commands and did their labour. Jesus preached the Gospel to the poor, preached it in their native tongue, not in a foreign tongue; preached it in such simplicity that the wayfaring man though a fool might understand it, and preached it with such power that the common people heard it gladly, hung upon His words and followed Him from place to place.

After the deputation had left, Jesus pronounces an eulogy on John. "What went ye out in the wilderness to see, a reed shaken by the wind?" Perhaps referring to the papyrus, or tall grass or cane that bent before the wind. Such was not the character of John the Baptist. "What went ye out for to see, a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses." Referring, no doubt, to John's plain attire in striking contrast to the costly apparel of the kings and high priests. "But what went ye out to see, a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, far more than a prophet, for this is he of whom it is written, 'Behold I send my messenger before my face who shall prepare the way before thee.' And I say unto you, that of all

born of woman, none have arisen greater than John the Baptist." Think of that eulogy; greater than David, Elijah, Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah. He was nearer to Christ and had a greater message than all who had preceded him, and yet said Jesus, "the least in the kingdom of Heaven will be greater than John." Meaning, no doubt, in spiritual knowledge, in understanding and power.

The question, "Art thou he that should come?" is the question of the day as well as the question that came as a cry from the prison cell of Machærus. The prophets said the Messiah would come, it was their song from Moses to Malachi. The pagan philosophers expected someone to come from God who would tell them all things. Even the false religions were full of Messiah hopes. In the beginning of the Christian era there was a general feeling that the fullness of time had come. Even the great astrologers were watching the stars. It was left for John the Baptist to declare He had come. He came from God to man, He came from heaven to earth, He came in the fullness of truth. Is He the Christ? Study the prophecies and you will find that Christ will fill their predictions precisely as though they had been tongued and grooved.

A weaver who had made an elaborate piece of tapestry hung it, stretched it upon the tenter-hooks, in his yard. That night it was stolen. A piece of tapestry was found by the officers which seemed to answer the description, but as the pattern was not unlike that of other fabrics, there must be definite proof. It was brought to the weaver's yard and there the perforations in the fabric were found to correspond precisely to the tenter-hooks. This was demonstration. In like manner if we place the life and character of Jesus over

against all prophecies of Messiah in Scripture, in the sacred books of the false religions, and in the universal longings of the race, we shall find that there is a perfect correspondence point by point. If this shall indeed prove to be the fact, we should feel justified in saying that Jesus of Nazareth is indeed the long-looked-for Messiah, the Christ of God.

His birth was predicted and He was to be a God. Man in nature, like Jacob's ladder, humanity resting upon the earth, and His Divinity reaching to the throne of God. His character was to be sinless. Diogenes, looking with a lantern for a man, or the prophet going through the streets of Jerusalem looking for a man free from sin, could turn to Jesus and find a man in whom there is no fault at all, and who could challenge the world to convict Him of sin. He was to be a teacher that could tell us about God and our relations to Him, and His relations to us; a teacher who could solve the vexing problems of life and untie the knots that defied the wise men of all ages. His miracles, unlike all others, were works of mercy that supported His teaching, showing that He who said, "Take up thy bed and walk" had power to say, "Thy sins are forgiven."

His death displayed the full measure of His love. If the wages of sin is death, to deliver man from this penalty He must die for him, hence the declaration, He loved us and gave Himself for us. His resurrection from the dead declared Him to be the Son of God with power. His abiding presence in the Church of the living God saves men from sin, and to build Christian character is the masterpiece of the ages, and the silent force that moves in the van of civilization.

If the question is asked by Jesus or by heathen or by skeptics or by any Christian with wavering faith, it

can be answered just as Jesus answered it; tell them who ask the question that the blind receive their sight, the deaf hear, the lame walk, the dead are raised, the Gospel is preached to the poor. Or, better still, tell them of greater things that have been accomplished in the onward march of Christ's kingdom. Tell them the lost are found, the perishing are rescued, the sinners are saved, the heathen idols have fallen from their thrones, the stony heart has been melted, the drunkard has been reformed, little children have been blessed, the virtue of woman has been protected, art has been elevated, literature has been purified, homes have been made happy, just laws have been enacted, the brotherhood of man has been recognized, the Fatherhood of God has been acknowledged. Yes, go tell the story of His love to your loved ones in the home, to your friends in society, to your co-labourers in business and to your classmates in school. Tell them what Christ has done for you, for your home, and for the world. Go tell them to do His will and doubts will flee and they will know that Jesus of Nazareth is Christ the Lord.

THE CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

How is it that I hear this of thee? Give an account of thy stewardship.—LUKE 16: 2.

THE parable of the unjust steward speaks of a rich man, apparently a nobleman of high rank who resides some distance from his estates. Over these he has placed a steward as administrator. The revenues of the estate this steward has wasted; he appears to have been either dishonest or careless. And when the owner becomes aware of this condition he serves notice of dismissal to the steward, desiring, however, before giving up his office, an account of the stewardship.

The dishonesty of the steward I shall not discuss, but shall direct your thoughts to the giving an account of stewardship. In the final analysis of the story, God is represented as requiring of us at the passing out of this life an account of our stewardship.

The Lord renders the moral interpretation of the parable when He says, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." We shall soon be called upon to give up all that we possess; therefore, we ought to be wise stewards of what God has given to us that we may be able to render an account unto Him in joy and not in shame.

To every one of us is committed the charge of our lives, our time, our talents, and our goods, whose real

owner is God. These are committed to us as a trust, and in dealing with this subject, we desire to use the term stewardship in a broader application than generally considered. The real stewardship has to do with life in its spiritual values as affecting the mind, and heart, and soul of man in their relation to God and in service in His kingdom. Stewardship is generally confined to the administration of money, whereas, tithing is only a fraction of the larger stewardship. A part is never equal to the whole, therefore, we must consider stewardship in its broader sense. Our own constitution, physical, mental and moral is a trust of which we shall have to give an account; all our talents, natural or acquired, are an estate of which we are stewards and shall have to render an account; our influence, direct and indirect, is an estate for which we shall have to render an account; our relationships and social positions are an estate over which we are placed and shall be required to render an account; our wealth, whether represented by money, real estate, bonds or stocks is an estate over which God has placed us, and of which we shall be asked to give an account. Therefore, from this broader view we shall consider the subject of stewardship and not confine it alone to material things, though no stewardship will be considered fully met unless it includes the stewardship of our earthly positions.

There are many derelicts in the Church; members whose names are on the church roll but who are not Christians; the church receives no benefit from their service. There are many absentee and nominal members who are related to the Church as a certain plant that grows on a tree in the tropical regions without being any part of the tree, and is often blown away by

storms; they are like barnacles on the boat. The Church gains no credit from this kind of church members. They add numbers but contribute nothing to the spiritual power of the Church. Gideon's army of thirty-two thousand lost no strength when twenty-two thousand went home, and of the ten thousand remaining, only three hundred had the requisite qualities of faith and moral courage so necessary to win the victory. Mr. Charles A. Cook, writing on this subject, relates this story:

"When the standard-bearer of a company of soldiers advanced away ahead of the company in making an attack upon an important position, the captain called to him, 'Bring the standard back to the company,' but the brave soldier replied, 'Bring the company up to the standard.' Every unfaithful church-member is practically demanding that the standard of Christian living shall be brought down to his level. Pastors and church officers and leaders should, however, earnestly endeavour to safeguard the church against this downward pull by every sort of loving, prayerful effort. Christian ideals must be made real."

The stewardship of life. Our lives are precious gifts of God. The responsibility of man to God for the great boon of life is overwhelmingly great. Therefore, the stewardship of life itself must be considered. What a man does with his money is only an expression "what is he doing with his life?" Emerson pointedly says, "What we are speaks so loud, what we say cannot be heard." In the outset of life it would be helpful if every person could begin with the acknowledgment that he belongs to God. As Isaiah has expressed it: "But now saith Jehovah that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel: Fear not, for I have

redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine."

Paul, in writing to the church of Corinth, says, "Ye are not your own for ye are bought with a price." And to the Romans he says, "We are the Lord's." The purchasing price was of infinite value. Surely, then, He who created us and owns us has a right to the fullest service that we can render to Him. This stewardship of life faces a man in right relationship with both God and his fellow-man, and should be an incentive to cultivate his mind and heart that he may be "fruitful in every good work," "a vessel unto honour sanctified," "meet for the master's use," "prepared for every good work."

It was said by Paul to the Macedonian Christians that "they first gave their own selves to the Lord." One of Jehovah's commandments that has come ringing down the ages is, "My son, give me thine heart." This recognition of divine ownership will lead to consecrated service and become an antidote to narrowness, meanness and idleness. Our Lord asks for service. He was amongst us as one that served. The great forces that are moulding the world for righteousness are not the noisy forces, not the newspapers, diplomats, governors and the thunders of the cannon, but the silent moral and spiritual forces that God is using for the shaping and transformation of the world. It is the force of the Christian life, in consecrated service that is dominating and making history. Men who recognize the stewardship of life, like Joseph, Daniel, Luther and Livingstone are the men who are lifting the world and are rendering daily accounts of their stewardship. They are the men who are living for the enlargement of life, for the service of others, for

the advancement of Christ's kingdom, and for the glory of God.

Stewardship of talents. One of the most telling parables of the Lord is the use of talents. He has distributed to every one certain gifts; these He designates as talents. In the broader sense, talents may be considered as natural or acquired. Our Lord is represented as giving these talents, and as the gift comes from Him, it must be considered an estate over which we have stewardship. These talents have been distributed one, two, five, and so on, and when the Lord comes He will ask us to render an account of our stewardship; therefore, no person can lay claim to an acceptable excuse when called upon to render an account. If a man cannot preach the Gospel, serve as an evangelist, or go as a missionary, he may have a talent for the making of money, like Alpheus Harvey, who had to give up preaching on account of physical weakness, but served God in business and became a great philanthropist in the work that he did both at home and abroad for Christ. These talents are so varied that they may be expressed in the power of speech, in writing, in influence, in skill manifested in science and art, or in service as a mechanic, carpenter, architect, engineer, musician, etc. The principle of stewardship applied will bring all under consecrated service to glorify God. The Lord called Bezaleel of the tribe of Judah and said, "I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in cutting of stones for setting, and in carving of wood, to work in all manner of workmanship."

It was the business of Bezaleel to use faithfully what God had bestowed upon him. In my ministry I have

known of men in many different trades and professions who accepted the responsibility of stewardship for the use of their talents. Some had great ability, some ordinary ability, but regardless of the endowments, they used the powers that God bestowed upon them to the greatest possible advantage in His service.

The Church has much talent as an asset in the way of by-products that are unused. Men and women who are hiding their talents away in a napkin, to the weakening of the Church, to the loss of service to mankind, to the grief of Christ and without question to the eternal condemnation of those who are not recognizing their stewardship. In the commercial and manufacturing world every effort is being made to conserve waste and energy. We read of the conservation of our forests, of the saving of by-products in mines, of using the coal dust that it be not wasted, of inventions to produce more heat with less fuel; why should not the Children of Light conserve their resources and prevent waste? To this end every believer should examine himself to see whether he is wasting any time or any spiritual resource that God has given to him; whether he is spending his energies in childish play and in worldly matters that are real loss to the kingdom of heaven.

The condemnation of those who do not use their talents. On that great day when Christ shall judge the world, condemnation falls upon those who failed to use their talents. The man who did not use his one talent is called "the wicked and slothful servant." Or as interpreted by Moffatt, "You rascal, you idle servant." Salt that has lost its savour is useless. The fig-tree that produced no figs was withered. The branch that bore no fruit was cut off and cast into the fire. Those

who receive commendation are those who use their talents in the Master's service. "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Those who made good use of their talents were the faithful servants. They were commended for doing their work well, were admitted to the joy of the Lord and made rulers over cities in proportion to the use of their talents.

The stewardship of time. The Psalmist says, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." Time is a part of eternity; it is a sacred trust; it is a part of life itself. We cannot save it as we do money by keeping it for use in the future. We hear of people saying "a good way to kill time." They know not the value of time. They will be called to account for the stewardship of the time they spent in idleness, in loafing, in gossiping, in useless efforts that render no service to humanity, add nothing to the world's moral growth and no benefit to the kingdom of heaven. Time rightly considered is knowledge and wisdom, power and influence, culture and wealth. There are others who are so occupied with worldly concerns they have no time for any special work in the Lord's vineyard. They are busy people, but busy for themselves and not for others.

There is still another class who are always delaying duty, especially the duty of service in the Master's vineyard. Hence the common expression, "Procrastination is the thief of time." Procrastination is a prolific cause of the loss of many souls. It is an excuse that dissipates time and steals the soul. Time lost is gone forever. Lost wealth may be replaced by industry; lost knowledge, by study; lost health, by temper-

ance; but lost time is gone forever. Shakespeare puts into the mouth of one of his characters the words, "I wasted time and now time doth waste me." Time wasted is the curse of many a life. Every moment wasted is that much character lost and life wasted. Those who realize that they will be called to render an account of their stewardship, set high value upon time. Their hours are fraught with thought, feeling and action. They are improving their minds by self-culture; they are helping humanity by doing good; they are following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ; they are laying by a good store for the future.

There are considerations that ought to weigh heavily upon us in "redeeming the time;" its brevity, the opportunities to be improved, the work to be done, the permanency of results and the achievements of those who are faithful stewards of time.

The lives of great men. Those who attain eminence or excellence are those who economize time. Barrett says: "Other things being equal, he who best weighs the hour, best spends the hour. Other things being equal, men are successful as they value time." Those who benefit the world by their wisdom and their country by their patriotism are those who make the best possible use of every minute. It is wonderful what men have done by working up the odds and ends of time. Macaulay learned German on a sea voyage. Dr. Abercrombie wrote many valuable books with a lead pencil while visiting his patients. Dr. Godd translated Lucretius while riding in his carriage in the streets of London. Dr. Darwin composed nearly all his works while driving from house to house in the country. Rev. Hale wrote his *Contemplations* while travelling on a circuit. Prof. Burney learned French

and Italian while travelling on horseback from one music pupil to another. Madam D'Genlis composed several of her charming volumes while waiting for the princess to whom she gave music lessons. One of the great chancellors of France wrote a book in the successive intervals of waiting for dinner. Mr. Fulton invented the steamboat, and Morse the telegraph, with the fragments of time. Thus we see that the very odds and ends of time may be worked up into results of the greatest value. An hour profitably employed every day yields valuable results in course of years. One's lifetime is short, but the amount that can be accomplished in it is remarkable. Sir William Hamilton read ten thousand books, and made marginal notes upon them. Hugh Miller wrote a library of science. St. Paul, in about thirty years, preached the Gospel and planted churches over the whole civilized world. Francis Xavier, during his lifetime, baptized a hundred thousand converts. John Wesley, in the course of his life, preached more than forty thousand sermons, and travelled three hundred thousand miles, or nearly fifteen times the circumference of the globe. Wm. Grey, the Boston merchant, who owned at one time sixty large ships, stated that for fifty years he arose at dawn. Perhaps no man made a better use of time than Benjamin Franklin. By the wise use of it he plucked the lightning from the clouds and the scepter from the hands of George the Third. When he stood before English lords in council, the object of abuse and ridicule; when he stood in the midst of the glittering court of France, the object of praise and admiration; when he stood in the American Congress, with his calm good sense directing its counsels; and when he tried experiments with his kite and his key, he

was redeeming the time and applying his heart unto wisdom. For many years Hale studied at the rate of sixteen hours a day. He became a great lawyer, philosopher, and mathematician. Spurgeon placed a high value upon time. I have in my library between thirty and forty volumes from his pen. These few examples of men who have coined minutes into hours and hours into days serve to show what can be done in a brief space of time.

All the distinguished of the world early formed the habit of gathering up the fragments of time. They were industrious from morning till night. They were faithful to their highest convictions and to the best thought which God gave to them. In this manner they changed time into life, and made every moment bring forth fruit.

Stewardship of money. One of the hardest stewardships for men to render an account is the stewardship of earthly goods. The ears of Jesus must often have been shocked by hearing men speak of "my fortune," "my land," "my house," "my money," not recognizing that the earth and the fullness thereof belongs to God. "The silver and gold are mine," saith the Lord. This stewardship must include all that is involved in the acquisition of wealth and the administration of it. It is commonly considered as the tithe being brought into the storehouse of the Lord. It is honouring the Lord with our substance and the fruits of our increase; it is the consecration of what we possess; this tithe is a fixed proportion that God requires of men. No man has no more right to determine the conditions of stewardship than he has to determine the conditions of the membership in the kingdom of heaven. This is God's prerogative based on the sov-

ereignty of God and His absolute ownership of the earth and the fullness thereof.

There may be some subjects on which the Head of the Church has not spoken, but has left to the judgment and spirit of His disciples; but on the subject of giving His teaching is explicit. The Scriptures have more to say upon this subject than almost any other. More emphasis is placed upon giving than upon faith, repentance, baptism, or love. Upon this subject there are many commands and examples, a few of which we will note. In the Old Testament we find one of the most elaborate systems of giving ever practiced on earth. God gave to the Jews the fullest possible directions regarding the providing of means for the carrying on of their worship. It embodied the principles of systematic giving, the carrying out of which resulted in ample provisions for the support of the priests and for the expenses of the costly service of the tabernacle or temple, including all their feasts and festivals, as well as the relief of those who were needy or destitute.

Every Jew had to pay a poll tax of about thirty cents when the enumeration of the adult males took place. This was counted as atonement money. In addition to this, there were Levitical tithes, or one-tenth of all the produce of the fields, flocks, herds, etc. Another tithe went to the festival service of the temple, and every third year another tithe for the support of the poor. In addition to this, the first of everything was offered to God. Besides, there were free will offerings—given voluntarily as special thank offerings. By this system, fully one-fifth of all the Jew's income was given for religious purposes.

Many are the exhibitions and examples of giving in the Old Testament Scriptures. We make mention of

the offerings of Cain and Abel; the offerings of tithes to Melchisedec by Abraham; the offering of Isaac by Abraham; the pledge of Jacob to give the tenth part to the Lord; the offering for the tabernacle; the dedication of Samuel to the Lord; Araunah's offering of land to David; David's magnificent gifts for the temple; the offerings to repair the temple in the time of Joash and in the time of Hezekiah; the widow's gifts to Elijah; the generous gifts of Nehemiah and the people.

God early taught His people what gifts and offerings He required of them. He early made systematic giving one of the laws of worship. And, considering the better covenant under which the Christian is living, the light and blessings of the twentieth century, the numerous and urgent calls for money, the facilities for using money for the temporal relief and eternal salvation of man, is it not incumbent upon him to give as liberally as did the Jew?

Instead of retreating, the Gospel impels to go forward. The standard is raised higher. Says Dr. Pierson: "We claim to be under the Christian Dispensation and free from the yoke of the law. How much advance have we made in our Christian modes of giving? The simple fact is, that we are giving nothing in comparison to the Jew, and that it would be a blessed thing if we would take upon ourselves as Christ's yoke, the Jewish law of giving." The need to enlarge our offerings for the temporal relief and the eternal salvation of men was never so great as now. We have more pressing motives than had the Jews. We have clearer instructions as to the value of religion and we enjoy the presence of Him whom prophets, priests, and kings desired to see and saw not; to hear and heard not. We have passed out of the shadow into substance; out of proph-

ecy into its fulfilment; out of the upper chamber under the roomy domes of heaven; out of the waiting age into the age of Christian opportunity. And if the Jews were bound to give liberally to their God, much more are we.

The New Testament records the mind of Christ upon this subject. Those who live in the light, liberty and blessing of the Gospel Dispensation should be loyal to their privileges and consistent with their claims. Those who believe in the New Testament Scriptures, as of binding authority to the Christian, should accept unqualifiedly and unreservedly the teachings of our Master upon this subject. Let us know what He taught and He will guide us aright. He will teach us how to possess and how to use our money. Thirteen of Christ's twenty-nine parables turn on a financial pivot. He has plenty to say about pounds, talents, stewards, rich fools, mammon, giving, withholding, etc. He declares that we should "Beware and take heed of covetousness." "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." "Give, and it shall be given unto you." "It is more blessed to give than to receive." He said of Mary who anointed Him with oil, "She hath done what she could." He commends the Good Samaritan for giving of his oil, wine and money to the man who had been beaten and robbed. He exhorts, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." He says, "Render unto Cæsar the things which belong to Cæsar and unto God the things which belong to God." "He sat over against the treasury and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury." The treasury was a divine institution which had been in existence for ages. It consisted of thirteen chests and the contribu-

tions were given to the support of the temple, the priests, and for the poor. The Lord deliberately sat over against the treasury and watched the people cast into it. He did it as one who professed to do it, and one who was interested in it. No one escapes His notice. He watches both rich and poor. He knows the income, the outlay, the offering, the motive, the spirit of every one who casts into the treasury.

What do the apostles, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, say on the subject of giving? Peter says: "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have I give unto thee," implying that if he had silver and gold he would give it. When there was a famine in Jerusalem the brethren at Antioch, under the direction of the apostles and elders, sent gifts. Paul tells how the church in Macedonia abounded unto the riches of their liberality, and commends the Corinthians to abound in this grace. In the course of two chapters in one of the letters to the Corinthians, the word "Grace" occurs eight times, and six times it refers to the grace of giving. He speaks of the gifts sent from Philippi as "An odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God." Paul exhorts Timothy, "Charge them who are rich in this world that they be not high minded, nor have their hopes set on the certainty of riches, but on God who giveth us all things to enjoy. That they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate. Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come that they may lay hold on eternal life." In the first letter to the Corinthians he says, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one

of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." The Hebrew Christians are commanded "to do good and to communicate, forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." John says, "But whoso hath this world's goods and beholdeth his brother in need and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him." Throughout the Word of God giving is considered as a grace and as sacred as any other duty. Alongside are the commands to "Go and labour in my vineyard;" "Go and preach the Gospel;" "Go and disciple all nations," comes another command which is equally necessary and important, and that is, "Give an account of thy stewardship."

All should give. "Every one of you." God's method of giving requires every one to give—rich and poor, young and old. No one is excused from this duty; no one is excluded from this privilege. There will be no true success until every member of the Church is taught and trained and encouraged to give. To expect the well-to-do to give all the money for the Lord's work is unreasonable and deprives the poor of the joy and comfort arising from giving. The Sacred Word tells us, "Charge them that are rich in this world's goods that they be ready to distribute," and also, "Let him that labours, work with his hands, that he may have to give to him that needeth."

According to ability. How much we owe to the Lord depends upon our income. "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." "Let every one give as God hath prospered him;" "According to their power." This is the reasonable rule—according to a man's ability, no less and no more. A man's giving is

based upon his receiving. Not as some one else gives, not according to what he gave in the past, but as the Lord is prospering him now—according to his present income; a man's income is the increase or gain he receives from every source whatever, including labour, profits and gifts. This is what God requires, and God judges each gift by the man's ability to give.

Systematically. "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." The first day of the week was the day on which the Saviour had risen from the dead and was the day on which the Christians began to worship. And on this day of worship and gratitude they were instructed to make an offering. Now, if this could be done in Paul's day among a people who had been started from the darkness of heathendom, then there surely is not a Christian community in which it cannot be done now. This does not forbid the giving outside of the system, but it inculcates the systematic and regular giving instead of spasmodic efforts.

Giving is an act of worship. The first Gentiles who saw Jesus worshipped Him by giving exalted gifts. "They came into the house and fell down and worshipped him; and opening their treasures, they offered unto him gifts and gold and frankincense and myrrh." As an act of worship, giving is as acceptable to God as prayer of the heart and praise of the lips or the observance of ordinances. Men should have convictions on this subject and feel about it as they feel about other acts of worship, for their hearts will open no wider than their pocketbooks. Giving is one of the

graces of Christianity. It is one of the fruits of the Spirit. It is an offering to the Lord. It is something that is choice that is presented to God. It should be a culminating act of worship, an act of worship that is purely devotional. An act of worship not to be slighted. An act of worship that should be conducted in a dignified and Scriptural manner. An act of worship as expressive of man's most devout sentiments and convictions. The worshipper's gifts are his attributes betokening his allegiance to God as Sovereign. They are the steward's returns acknowledging the Divine proprietorship. They are the disciple's offerings testifying of his love for his Master. They are the worker's contribution expressing his desire for the fulfilment of the Lord's great commission.

The benefits and blessedness of the stewardship of money. There is a great reflex value in giving for God's work. We are taught by nature that those things which give most get back most; the ocean which furnishes the rains for the continents receives into its bosom the rivers of mighty waters which flow from the streams of a thousand hillsides. This law of nature holds true in the kingdom of heaven.

The liberal giver is blessed. They who give most receive most. Every good work performed with right motives, and every offering given in the right spirit is followed by a blessing to him who performs the work or makes the offering. Man should not give simply for the sake of reward, but if he gives as a sense of duty and right spirit he will surely be liberally rewarded. Christian giving is like mercy; it is twice blessed; it blesseth him that gives and him that takes. God has promised, and His promises do not fail. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." "Seek first

the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you." "Whoso shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall find it." "He that sows bountifully shall reap bountifully." "Unto him that hath it shall be given." "Honour the Lord with thy substance and with the first fruits of all thine increase; so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." "Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down and shaken together and running over, shall men give into your bosom."

Liberal giving promotes a man's love for his fellow-men and enlarges his sense of responsibility for them. It will turn the current of his love toward the object for which he is offering. It will give him a personal interest in the enterprises; it will bless the giver on his way to heaven. It is laying up a good foundation for the hereafter. The Lord frequently spoke of this in His parables. In the parable of the talents He commanded that the talent should be taken away from him that had one talent and be given unto him that had ten talents. Our liberality in this direction will the better prepare us for heaven, not that heaven can be purchased, but that the right use of money can greatly brighten the path on the way to heaven and increase our treasures in heaven.

Liberal giving will bless the church. Anxiety about offerings for local work and missions ceases. There is money abundant for all purposes.

Liberal giving will bless the nation. Nations which are most missionary are the wealthiest nations. Moffatt declares, "Missionaries to our barbarian people deserve a vote of thanks from the commercial world." Political economists claim that for every missionary to

ship, the Lord says, "By the mammon of unrighteousness make to yourselves friends, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitation." This term mammon does not signify God, but money, and it means when you shall be dismissed from being stewards of God's possessions or, in other words, when you die, then, if you have used it to make friends and converts to the Lord, they will welcome you into the eternal homes. Or as another has rendered it, "they will show to their brethren the newly arrived with joy and glory." What a boon, then, what an incentive to a stewardship such as God requires. Let us, then, remember that we shall soon take a journey to a land beyond the grave where our money, our talents, our time and our lives will be of no avail unless we have been faithful stewards in consecrating them to the service of the Lord.

THE BUILDING OF THE CHURCH

Whom say ye that I am?—MATTHEW 16: 15.

THE Church of Christ is a divine institution for the salvation of the human race. The eternal redemption of man depends on Christ through the ministration of the Church. All great enterprises, constitutions, inventions, books, reformations, are the result of much thought and sacrifice. So the Church of Christ was developed out of thousands of years of suffering and sacrifice, culminating in the tragedy of the Cross. The Church comes to us with her garments perfumed with the devotion and consecration of millions of God's best men and women; she comes to us with a message of comfort for the sorrowing, of rest for the weary, and of salvation for the lost; she comes encouraging the weary soldier of faith to continue the fight of faith and to lay hold on eternal life. With the coming of the Church there came a new hope to mankind; with the coming of the Church the lifeline was thrown out to the sinking sailor on the sea of destruction. The question as to the rock upon which the Church is built has been a fighting-ground for ages; it is therefore important that we go to the fountain source and study closely the words of the text to ascertain if possible the meaning Christ desired to convey.

The words of the text were spoken at Cæsarea Philippi, the farthest point north visited by Christ during

His earthly journeys. It was a city that held the sanctuary at Pan; it was beautified by Herod the Great; it was adorned by Philip and named after the Emperor; it was the site of a Roman barracks where the beacon light was flashed from hill to hill; it is now called Banias and is the habitat of a few impoverished-looking inhabitants. Hither Jesus came after a preaching journey through Galilee. His first question was to elicit the human views of Christ. Strange how the opinions of men differ on various subjects. One affirms the works of nature are the production of chance; another attributes them to some first cause; another says nature is of divine origin. Strange how the opinions of men differ on various points of religion. Even when they reside in the same city and assemble in the same place of worship; men differ in regard to the practice of religion; one contents himself with half a system, another with adherence to creeds, another in obedience to the ten commandments; another associates the pleasures of the world with the practice of piety, another condemns himself to penances and mortification; another seeks to withdraw from the world and to live in seclusion; another spends time in meditation and prayer; another seeks to follow the Lord's example, and thus men try to satisfy their conscience in various ways in the practice of religion.

Never was a question more important and on which men differ more widely than that pertaining to Jesus Christ. Some considered Him a politician in disguise; some considered Him an enthusiast; some thought Him an emissary of the devil, and others the envoy of God. Some had a high and some a low opinion of Him. Some were superstitious and said He was Elias, some said John the Baptist, and others Jeremiah the prophet.

Jesus put the first question to His disciples, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" Or, in other words, do they say that I am the Son of Man? In this phrase does Jesus mean an excellent man or the man of whom the prophets had spoken—the super-man whose coming was the object of their desire and prayers? What could have been the design of Jesus asking this question? Various motives prompt men and women to ask such questions and seek replies to them. Sometimes pride may put the question. When such is the case those asking it suppose they are the subject of conversation and the centre of social circles, and the principal person to be seen amongst men. But as a rule such persons are not considered as worth-while in society, and but few people know anything of their existence. If anything is said about them they are spoken of as being haughty and proud and being a public calamity and not as being a benefactor.

The question may be put from a standpoint of revenge; thus seeking to know the opinion of enemies; such carry revenge as a sweet morsel in the mouth and seek an opportunity to speak or do evil to a real or supposed enemy. Of such people the world generally considers them as ever ready to sow seed of discord, to forge tales of lies and to report scandalous things; such persons are of pernicious influence in society; the world would be better off without them.

The question may be put from the standpoint of benevolence; when such is the case, the desire may be to rectify mistakes, to correct erroneous impressions, and to set right wrong views that might be circulated. Jesus knew what men thought of Him, but He required the disciples to relate the people's opinions that He might assist them in correcting wrong impressions of

their beloved Master. The disciples very kindly omitted any odious opinions, but referred particularly to the superstitious views that men held of Jesus. Many thought the prophets who were murdered would be raised from the dead at the coming of the Messiah, and therefore the report had gone abroad that Jesus was John the Baptist, because John had met such a violent death. Some thought He was Elijah the prophet, because Malachi had prophesied that Elijah would come before the Lord. Such were some of the opinions of the Jews about Jesus. They failed to understand the full significance of the prophecies and so left their great questions undecided; they had business and would not neglect it; they loved their pleasures and would not suspend them; they were interested in the present life and cared but little for the life to come; for the same cause many of the earth's inhabitants are afflicted today; and therefore, men eat, drink, sleep and make merry to the neglect of their salvation.

Jesus, having heard from the mouths of the apostles the opinions that the people entertained of Him, saith unto them, "But, who say ye that I am?" Peter, who replied for himself, also replied for the rest of the apostles, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God." Simon Peter was a man of remarkable activity and vivacity, always ready to speak whether it resulted in his humiliation or advancement; does he see Jesus walking on the water, Simon must undertake to walk toward Him. Does he hear Jesus talk of His death, Simon says, "This shall not be of thee." Does he see Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, Simon says, "Lord, it is good for us to be here;" does he hear Christ say all of these shall be offended of Me this night, Simon declared he would not be offended of Him.

Does he see Jesus arrested and in the hands of His enemies, Simon draws the sword and cuts off the ear of Malchus; Peter was animated with a holy jealousy for the Lord; he could entertain no thoughts of any other having greater zeal for the Master; so when Christ asks the question, "Whom say ye that I am?" Peter's heart beats with love and he speaks quickly and emphatically, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God." Thou art the Messiah, the King. The prophets had foretold His coming. "The Lord hath said unto me, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." God conferred this title from heaven, the angels promised to the mother of Jesus that her son should be great and should be called the "Son of the Highest." Peter had no more than made this confession than Jesus said, "Blessed art thou, Simon, flesh and blood hath not revealed this to thee, but my Father which is in heaven." And added, but "I say also to thee that thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it." If Jesus had not been the Son of God and promised Messiah, He would have repudiated Simon's confession; but to the contrary, He accepted it as a truth of heavenly origin and special revelation.

Now as to the question of the foundation of the Church; was Christ or Peter the rock? This has been the bone of contention and the campaign of controversy. We affirm Christ was the rock foundation on which the Church was built, and not Peter. The words Petras and Petra are not identical; the former is masculine and the latter is feminine; the one is a rock, the other a stone; herein is a play upon the words; Petras as applied to Peter means a stone hewn out of the rock.

The second ground for rejecting the interpretation

that makes Peter the rock of the Church is its utter unreasonableness; the Church is a divine institution through which God is working for the salvation of the human race. It would be preposterous to suppose that God would found this institution upon a man such as Simon Peter.

Peter and the other apostles in their sermons and writings never recognized Peter as the rock foundation of the Church. His primacy was disputed when the twelve contended as to which should be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven; it was disputed when Paul withstood him face to face because he was wrong; it was disputed when the first great council was presided over by James, the pastor of the Jerusalem church; it was disputed when Paul declared that the Gospel he preached was not of man, but received from God. It was disputed when Paul declared that the Gospel of circumcision was committed to Peter and of uncircumcision to Paul (2: 7). It was disputed when Paul declared that all the churches were committed to his care and not to Peter (2 Cor. 11: 28). It was disputed when Paul declared that other foundations can no man lay than that which is laid, Christ Jesus being the chief corner-stone. It was disputed when Peter speaks of himself as one of the apostles and as an elder amongst the elders (1 Peter 5: 1). It was disputed when Peter referred to the prophecy, "Behold I lay in Zion a chief corner-stone elect and precious, and he that believeth on him shall not be put to shame." The question of his supremacy was not advanced until the dark ages and its formulation was not precipitated until the reformation. Paul settled the whole question when he said in the letter to the Ephesians, "Being built upon the foundation of the apostles

and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner-stone." There can be no substitution for that of Jesus as the corner-stone of the Church until God announces from heaven that God so loved the world that He gave Simon Peter to redeem it. There can be no acceptance of Peter as the rock on which the Church is built until it is revealed from heaven that the blood of Peter cleanses us from all sin.

This confession Simon Peter made is of divine origin.

It is the foundation on which the Church is built.

It was the essence of the apostolic preaching.

It was the logical argument of the evangelistic writers.

It was the confession made by penitent sinners before baptism.

It was the confession that Christ made before the high priest and Pontius Pilate that resulted in His death.

It is the confession that all will have to make some day for their joy or sorrow, in which Christ will be recognized as the Son of God and the promised Redeemer.

Jesus gave the keys to Peter with which to open the kingdom of heaven; that is the authority to announce the terms of salvation to the Jews and to the Gentiles as recorded in the second and tenth chapters of Acts; this privilege Peter exercised together with the other apostles, but in no sense was it the primacy such as has been accorded to him by the Romish church.

It was also affirmed by Jesus, "The gates of hades shall not prevail against it." This assurance is given to the Church because it is founded upon the rock of ages. Customs and institutions, dynasties and nations, systems of government and philosophies have passed

away and are passing away. Have we any reason to believe or fear that Christianity will meet with the same fate? The great historical religions that preceded Christianity in Egypt, Greece and Rome have passed away. Will Christianity abide the ravages of time, or become subject to the laws of the ancient religions? I think not, for unlike these ancient religions, Christianity is neither a prescribed creed, nor a political constitution, nor a code of laws, but rather a body of principles to serve as the foundation of a higher type of moral and spiritual life. It is designed to assist society in an indefinite progress for all time to come. In the ancient religions morality was taught by certain outward actions that were commanded and others that were forbidden, such as the commandments of Moses, in which the people were told what to do and what not to do. It was doubtless the best course to be taken in that primitive age. But in these latter days, Christianity imprints itself on the heart. It plants itself firmly on the thought, intention, and purpose of man; it promises a blessing to those who have certain graces that are of the inner life; it has blessings for the meek, the merciful and the pure in heart. Therefore, no human mind can ever outgrow Christianity. Then again the *New Testament presents an example to follow* which makes imitation of that example binding upon the soul. Thus, whoever obeys the instructions of Christ has an example to follow; the need of such divine pattern or presentation of such exalted character was felt ages before Christ came. Hence the ancients were inclined to place their wise men or imaginary gods before the people as an inspiration to them. Widely different is the character of Christ as set forth in the Gospel from the character of the sages

of old. Insomuch that the Christian example can never lose its authority or become obsolete. Jesus thus becomes the fixed character for all time to come that shall stand commensurate, with the progress of society. Nature is a fixed quantity; society and the human mind change, but nature never becomes obsolete. Man's views of nature may change, but nature never; so it is with the character of Christ. Man's views may change, but this great ideal character remains a fixed quantity and an indestructible and unchangeable rock upon which to build our character and our hopes. Jesus will ever stand as the highest and the best. And as the Church is built by this divine architect and upon Him as the divine foundation, His religion will never pass away. Other religions will have their beginning, their middle and their end; philosophies may have their culmination, their glory and their death, but Christianity is an everlasting possession. It is essentially so because it is divine. If men would build themselves according to Christ's teaching and example and would inculcate into the texture of their souls the virtues and graces of Christianity, they would have a witness within themselves. Jesus thus became the father of a new age, when the laws of Moses were nailed to the cross. Modern civilization is built on the religion that Christ introduced into the world. This religion would tumble into ruins if faith in Him would fail.

We may wonder at the follies of man, at the divisions and strife amongst Christians, at the scepticism and atheisms of men, but these lights and shadows of society will not prevail against the Church that Christ has established. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away." The Church shall

stand and march onward with stately steps to the last syllable of recorded time. Mighty efforts have been launched against it; enemies ancient in history, powerful in arms, extensive in influence have opposed it, but it still stands, and not one stake of Zion has been removed. Judaism tried to overthrow it; paganism with its armies sought to destroy it; the barbarians with their cruelty tried to overthrow it; the Mohammedans with fire and sword tried to destroy it; the higher critics with their rationalistic views tried to undermine it; but the Church still stands and marches on like an army with banners from victory to victory. And as it has stood the test of time so it shall stand against hades; the Lord hath said, "the gates of hades shall not prevail against it." When hades and death are cast into the lake of fire the Church with its redeemed shall be singing the heavenly anthem, "Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, worthy is the Lamb to receive honour, glory and blessing."

Jesus promised to bless Simon Peter in the words "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." The great confession that Simon made was not because of his genius, wit, cleverness and mental energies, nor because of what he had read in any book, but it was a revelation from God, an announcement from the skies; an announcement that was made at the baptism of Jesus when a voice from above was heard saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." This revelation also welled up in his heart as a result of his association with Christ; his being a witness of the works of Christ; his hearing the sermons of Christ; his close walk and communion with Christ enabled him to make the great procla-

mation that Jesus was the Son of God and promised Messiah.

Wonderful words, "Blessed art thou." We speak of the dead as being blessed, but here is a blessing pronounced to the man who reaches the point of confessing openly his faith in Jesus as the Son of God and promised Messiah. Peter seemed to stand in the sun, he was never so great before, he was transfigured by his own vision; he was no longer a common fisherman; he had become the temple of the indwelling God; his face must have been transfigured as with a heavenly lustre; he must have been surprised at his own utterance; his voice burst forth in the declarations of the convictions of his heart; it was the outpouring of the inner voice of soul conviction of a great man standing before his Lord and Master; it was an expression of his joy of the revelation that had been given to him from above and that came from his own heart and soul in an open confession of the feelings this revelation inspired. Have you ever stood on the shore of the ocean and surveyed the wide expanse of the seas and had a feeling within of the boundlessness of the ocean that came as a touch of the greatness of God that seemed to inspire you with feelings of awe and love? It's the sense of the infinite that is being revealed to thee; the feelings come from no material source, flesh and blood do not reveal it, but the inspiration of the Father in heaven. Doubtless the heart of Peter often burned as he walked and talked with the Master. Doubtless his aspiration often soared because his thoughts and heart were in harmony with the will of the Lord. Would we be blessed, let us live in faith, so near to the Master that we can feel the touch of His hand upon our heads, the warmth of His love in our

hearts, the inspiration of His example in our aspirations for a better life and the hope that He sets before us as the goal of our existence.

THE ROCK AND THE SAND

BY J. H. ROSECRANS

*On what are you building, my brother,
Your hopes of an eternal home?
Is it loose, shifting sand, or the firm, solid rock,
You are trusting for ages to come?*

*On one or the other, my brother,
You are building your hopes, day by day;
You are risking your soul on the works that you do:
Will the dark waters sweep you away?*

*Your Saviour has warned you, my brother:
I pray you, give heed to His voice:
There is life on the rock, but there's death on the sand—
O my brother, pray tell me your choice.*

*No matter how careful, my brother,
The sand for your house you prepare,
'Twill be all swept away when the floods shall descend,
Leaving nothing but death and despair.*

CHORUS:

*Hearing and doing, we build on the Rock;
Hearing alone, we build on the sand;
Both will be tried by the storm and the flood—
Only the Rock the trial will stand.*

PROFIT AND LOSS

What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?—MARK 8:36.

A PLAIN question; considered by some as one of Christ's hard sayings. Some consider the saying as an absolute conflict between material and spiritual things. Not so; our Lord made them both and knew their value and in this Scripture He sounds a warning against the inordinate attachment to material things that run counter to our faith. We live in a materialistic age when great value is placed upon worldly possessions, and Jesus points out the importance of making a just estimate of values. God made the world for man to use. Man was made to accumulate wealth by the use of his faculties in transforming nature into the various uses for his service. The wealth of the world has travelled with the advance of civilization. Savages accumulate but little wealth. There is an old saying that "money makes the mare go"; the meaning of which is that money is a mighty force amongst men. It is a dominant power in controlling the affairs of men. Go into the marts of trade, go along the thoroughfares of exchange, go into the halls of learning, go into the offices of the professions, go into churches and courts, go into the realms of official power and *everywhere*, you will find money represents powerful agencies and interests. On the other hand, go among the evil things that disturb and dis-

grace men, that corrupts society and ruins nations, and there you will find that wealth is an agent for promoting evil. It has often been the agent in controlling votes, legislations, judiciaries and politics. When in the hands of a few it is too often to enrich the few and impoverish the many.

Men are running wild for that which is not bread and labouring for that which does not satisfy. Materialistic success is blighting every department of life. It is gaining ground in our schools and universities insomuch that they are asked to produce "money getters and grabbers" instead of young men and women with culture, grace and high ideals. It is invading our homes until its economic pressure is producing speed standards that are destroying the home that has long been considered one of the foundation-stones of American life. It is invading the industrial life and throwing labour and capital out of joint by economic and social practices that blight the souls of both. It is invading the Church, dwarfing the ministry and lowering the spiritual influence of the members of the Church of God until many are conforming to the ways of the world instead of converting the world to Christ. Its iron hand is controlling the great movements amongst the nations and repressing the efforts to promote peace and good will among men. In the days of Noah, the spirit of the world was violence. In the days of Elijah, idolatry. In the day of Christ it was power as expressed by ancient Rome. In our day it is the love of money.

The right use of money means clothes to wear, food to eat, shelter to protect, conveyances for transportation, tools to work with, books to read; conveniences, comforts and luxuries in the home; ease and freedom

in travelling; appliances of all kinds for the benefits and advance of science and the fine arts. Emerson says: "The world is his who has money to travel over it in a sumptuous ship floored with costly carpets and equipped like a luxurious hotel." Money in itself has no moral quality, neither good nor bad. Neither money itself nor the acquiring of it is the root of evil, but the coveting of it and using it for evil purposes, then it becomes the curse that wounds the souls of men, entangles them in vices and destroys their moral and spiritual power. Goethe has well said, "Nobody should be rich, but those who understand it." Wealth to some people is a compromise of their character, and steals away their souls, while to others it becomes an agency for great good because they know how to administer it and use it for righteous purposes.

The people of the United States set a high value upon money insomuch that the world accuses us of being "too beastly prosperous," of estimating everything by the pocketbook. While there is some truth in this accusation, yet we are free of late years from some national sins of which other nations are guilty; when we won the victory in the Spanish-American War we did not rob Spain of her possessions, but dealt kindly with her. We sent her back home in our own ships, we purchased the Philippines, obtained Porto Rico honestly and set Cuba free. In the Boxer disturbance in China we did not take China by the throat, as did some other nations, and make her pay us doubly for our losses, but Uncle Sam said, "Keep your money and use it to educate your young men in the institutions of learning in America." When the World War ended we did not ask for money, we made no demand upon Germany for any of her possessions, we did not ask

her to compensate us for the immense money expended in the World War, neither did we ask for a portion of the reparations, save for the army of occupation. Furthermore, when the war-stricken world wanted money, the nations turned to America for it, and they got it. These incidents are sufficient to refute the European cry that "All America cares for is the dollar." Notwithstanding, we must not lose sight of the fact that we *are* living in a materialistic age when avarice and covetousness are drowning the souls of men in the deceitfulness of riches. Jesus knew the value of material possessions to carry on the world's activities and to extend the kingdom of heaven. He also knew that spiritual values are of more importance than material values and should be made the chief object in life's achievements. A critical time comes in the lives of men when they must decide which shall be first, earthly or spiritual values, material or soul value, having or being. As it is a question of values, and we have considered briefly some of the values of material possessions, let us next consider the value of the soul.

The value of the soul is seen in its origin. God said, "Let us make man in our image and after our likeness." This divine resemblance refers to the soul and not to the body. Man is made in His image with a faculty to discern between right and wrong, with a mind to apprehend the truth, with powers to contemplate God's being, His government and claims, to enjoy His friendship, to reciprocate His love, to work out His purpose and to enjoy His promises. This image is a very imperfect copy, but it implies a perfect one.

The value of the soul is manifest in its achievements. When the powers of the soul are trained as in the men

of science, philosophy and letters, they are enabled to survey, measure and describe the heavenly bodies, to search out the hidden mysteries of nature, to delve into the earth, to count the cycles of its duration, and to analyse and classify the plants, to dissect and classify the animal kingdom, to cultivate and improve the earth and make it fruitful, to invent alphabets and write books, to collect in libraries the knowledge of all countries and ages, to invent devices of all kinds, which if they could be assembled in one place would present a magnificent panorama of practical and bewildering achievements. This being true, what a loss it would be to have such powers wasted, blighted and damned.

The value of the soul is manifest in the contention of heaven and hell for it. Heaven invites it to come to God. Christ came to show us the way. His ministers watch for souls in season and out of season; the angels of God wait as messengers of good news to carry the tidings of the penitent sinner from earth to heaven. On the other hand, the devil seeks to tempt and destroy the souls of men; he goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour; he is in the pathway of the unwary waiting to deceive and to seduce his victims by the love of pleasure; he seeks to keep men from hearing the Gospel and to turn those who hear it from light to darkness that they may travel the broad road to destruction.

The value of the soul may be seen in the price paid for its redemption. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." It was for the souls of men that Jesus left His home beyond the skies and came to this sin-stricken world to suffer

and to give His life a ransom. Surely this ransom price of the soul bespeaks its inestimable value.

Soul value may also be seen by the eternity of bliss or woe that awaits it. We shall soon begin a state of life that will never end; the present life is but the seed-time for eternity. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap; for he that sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." Considering that Christ has gone to prepare a place in the mansions of God for those who have accepted Him as their Saviour, and on the other hand, considering the misery and loss and destiny of the unsaved who have rejected Him, place an infinite value on the soul. The distance between heaven's rapturous joys and hell's horrible punishment, is the measure of God's estimate of man. What wonder Jesus said, "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul."

The danger of losing the soul. This cannot mean annihilation, for nothing can be absolutely destroyed. Therefore, it must refer to the soul losing its sonship with God, its fellowship with God's family, its manifest purpose, its consolation in Christ, its comfort of love, its peace that passeth all understanding, its joy in the Holy Spirit, its spiritual character, the loss of its future home in heaven with just spirits made perfect and with the Lord Jesus Christ with His light and love and glory. In short, it is the loss of holiness, happiness, hope and heaven. It is the loss of God, of God's favour, God's love, God's protection, God's redemption and God's light. The Scriptures testify to the certainty of this loss. "Enter ye in at the straight gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat;"

“ Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God; ” “ Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish; ” “ Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God; ” “ Except ye be converted, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven; ” “ How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation; ” “ The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. ” The Scriptures contain many such quotations. Jesus said, “ Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. ” No wonder Christians give so much time, thought and energy to the spread of the Gospel; it is because of the infinite value of the soul.

The whole world cannot compensate for the loss of a soul. “ What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul? ” It is not possible for a man to possess the whole world or even to see the whole world; but the thought that is here expressed has in it the supposition that, should a man gain all the riches, honours, delights, and pleasures that he could possibly enjoy, what would it profit him if he lost his own soul? Read the history of the centuries and you will see how men live and toil to get, to win, to grasp, to obtain what they call wealth, material values, expressed in houses, lands, jewels, money, stocks and bonds, all of which may be expressed as *worldly gain*. Then how do these things stand in relation to the soul? The material things are transient while the things that belong to the soul are everlasting. The earthly treasures are called “ gain. ”

What is the supposed gain, the whole world? To gain the whole world may have been the ambition of some men like Alexander the Great, who is said to have conquered the world and wept because there were

no more worlds to conquer, but instead of conquering the world, he allowed his evil passions to conquer him. The Romans were said to have been masters of the world, but there were vast continents of which they knew nothing. The United States and the British Empire have extensive possessions, but they are far from possessing the world. Suppose man, in his desire to gain the world, could become possessed of health of body, vigour of mind, hilarity of spirit, high official position, the title of a king, the luxuries of the table, the most extensive opportunity for intellectual investigation, a cultivated taste for poetry, music, oratory and the refinements of painting and sculpture, a palatial home under perennial skies in the midst of cheerful companions with wine and women where he could have every desire gratified in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, what would be his gain? Solomon obtained these worldly things and then cried out, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit." No man could have all these earthly things, for his capacity would be limited, his health would not permit it, and his conscience would cry out in rebellion.

Profit and loss. What did Adam gain in eating the forbidden fruit? The devil's laugh and approbation, but he lost paradise. What did Cain gain in killing Abel? The gratification of revenge, but he lost God's favour and became a wanderer upon the earth. What did Lot gain by pitching his tent toward Sodom? The high seat amongst the Sodomites, but he lost his wealth and most of his family. What did Achan gain in his theft? A golden wedge, thirty pieces of silver and a Babylonish garment, but he lost his life. What did Ahab gain in killing Naboth? A vineyard, but he lost his life and that of his wife Jezebel. What did

Belshazzar gain in the feast with his lords and concubines? The gratification of animal passion and appetite, but he lost his life, his soul and his kingdom. What did Gehazi gain by lying? A change of raiment and a few talents of silver, but he lost his health and became a leper. What did Judas gain in selling Christ? Thirty pieces of silver, but he lost his soul. What did Ananias and Sapphira gain by lying to the apostles? A portion of an earthly possession, but they lost their lives and souls. What did the rich fool gain by keeping all his earthly possessions stored away in more barns? One day of ease, but he lost his soul. What did Herod gain by appearing in a shining raiment as if he was a God? The blasphemous applause of the people, but he lost his soul. In like manner nations and cities have set the supreme value upon temporal things and have perished through their vices of covetousness, licentiousness and cruelty. For example, Persia, Egypt, and Rome. The world is so organized that men who seek the lowest values as expressed in gain, such as avarice, lying, theft, hypocrisy, slander, will find their undoing because they neglected moral and spiritual values.

What shall a man give in exchange for his soul? In the days of slavery, men, women and children were sold at various prices. In China, women and girls are sold at a low figure. What would you take for your child? In a Sunday-school in a central state some years ago a Sunday-school pupil was asked to come to the rostrum and the teacher said, "What is this boy worth?" and some mischievous pupil said thirty cents; just then the father arose and said, "He is my son, and all the money in the State of Illinois could not buy him." Mark Hopkins, the President of Williams Col-

lege, said to his senior class, "How many of you would accept from me a million dollars as the price of your hearing; probably a good many of you? How many of you would be willing to be both deaf and dumb for the sake of a million dollars? Perhaps there are some here who would be willing. But if I said to you, how many of you, for the sake of a million dollars, would be willing to sacrifice sight, speech and hearing, you would then pause; for the time would then have come that you would have to decide whether you would rather *have something* or be *somebody*." The story illustrates the difference in values.

In Brazil there is a plant called the "Matador" or "Murderer." It will climb a vigorous tree with a clinging grasp and as it climbs it sends out armlike tendrils that embrace the tree; as it ascends, these grow larger and clasp tighter; up it goes, if necessary a hundred or two hundred feet until it overtops the tree; then, in triumph, it shoots its head above the summit; the tree by this time is strangled to death and the vine sends out its seed to again do the work of death. Thus it is that Materialism will grasp and strangle to death its devotees.

You may remember reading, when you were a child, the story about the voyage of Sinbad, the sailor, into the Indian Sea. There arose from the placid waters a magnetic rock that attracted the vessel of Sinbad and as the vessel drew near the rock the bolts were drawn out of the ship, the clamps were unloosed and the whole structure gave way, fell a wreck into the sea and the sailors awoke in drowning agony. Thus stands the magnetic rock of worldliness across the Christian's path. Its attractive power is subtle, silent, slow but powerful on every soul that comes within its range. Its

attractive and enchanting power will destroy good resolutions, high aspirations, Christian duties and responsibilities. No wonder Christ sounds the warning to look to the counter attraction, the saving power of the salvation He has brought from heaven to man.

Ruskin relates the story of a man who was shipwrecked and before leaving the vessel he bound around him a belt containing two hundred sovereigns of gold pieces, then adjusted the life-preserver and slipped into the water, but the gold more than offset the life-belt and he sank to the bottom and perished. "Now," says Ruskin, "did he have the gold or did the gold have him?" That man gained the gold and lost himself.

A woman in East St. Louis whose house caught afire when she was absent, shopping, on her return, seeing the blaze, became active in removing her furniture, but forgot her child that was sleeping in the cradle. Suddenly remembering the babe, she ran into the house, but a roaring flame stopped her, it was too late. Emerging from the house, she cried, "My child, my child; I have saved my goods but lost my child!" How many parents are more anxious about saving earthly treasures than saving their souls and the souls of their children.

A young society lady from New York City who met with an accidental death near Los Angeles, on being told that she had only one hour to live, cried out, "I have spent my time and money in fashionable society and am now to lose my soul."

Spurgeon was offered a large sum to come to America to lecture. He replied that he did not have time to spare to make money.

What it means to lose the soul. What would a damned soul such as Dives, Judas and the rich fool

give to retrace their steps? When a soul is lost, behold, what a treasure of infinite value is lost, a lost soul! Who can define the meaning of these words? Health may be lost and the constitution shattered, but good air, good food, good exercise and good care may restore the health. Friends may be lost, but kindness and love and good will may restore friendship. Property may be lost, but industry, economy and patience may regain lost property. But when the soul is lost, it is lost forever; it is an irreparable loss. There is nothing on earth that you would give in exchange for your soul. Its value in the sight of God outweighs the material values. Earthly possessions are helpful for development, but they are no substitute for spiritual possessions. The one has no sense of enjoyment, the other has capabilities of enjoying the fellowship with God. Material worth must be secondary to soul worth. Our heavenly Father knows the value of the soul; He knows the whole world cannot compensate for the loss of the soul. He knows that its value is priceless. Therefore He taught: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." Then let us hear the voice of Jesus calling: "Now is the accepted time, today is the day of salvation." Let us make haste and be sure to enrich our souls with salvation.

CHRISTIANITY VERSUS MORTALITY

What shall I do to inherit eternal life? What lack I yet?
—MATTHEW 19:20; MARK 10:21.

THE principal actor in this parable was a *young* man. Matthew incidentally alludes to this and it adds interest to the story. Our hearts are attracted to *young* men; they are ingenious, frank, trustful, hopeful and loving. There is considerable mystery attached to youth. We know what the aged have been; we know what those in middle life are, but we cannot foretell the outcome of youth. It is a casket containing wonderful possibilities. It is covered with delicate buds and beautiful flowers of promise.

Being a *young* man, it incites our interest. A youth standing in the presence of Him who knew what human life might include, what human souls are worth, what salvation meant, what influences men of position could exert, what capabilities were wrapped up in the life of the young man and what an eternity of happiness could be secured by him. It is a joy to see the aged come to Jesus, but more so to see the young.

He was a man of wealth. St. Luke says, "He was very rich," and Matthew tells us, "He had great possessions." This may not have made him more interesting to Christ; for Jesus is no respecter of persons, but it does to us. The man may have been of no more intrinsic worth than the blind Bartimæus by the wayside, but because he is the heir of a fortune we become

interested in him, and especially anxious about his career; we shall be glad if he takes a wise course and grieved if he goes astray. There is nothing said about his riches being illy gotten; nothing said about any sin attached to them. The fact is, a Christian man possesses the requisite qualities to make a successful business man—diligence, temperance, industry and honesty; the man who practices these virtues will prosper. Among God's people of old there were men of wealth. Abraham was the possessor of a large fortune; David and Solomon had their millions; Barnabas was a man of large possessions; Jason, who bailed out the apostle, was a man of wealth. There is no sin in being rich, if the riches are honourably gotten and honourably used. There is no sin in being poor, unless it is due to thriftlessness and idleness.

This young man was possessed of some noble qualities; he was earnest. Mark tells us he came running to Jesus. His question was not prompted by curiosity. He was not formal and careless; he was anxious to learn from Jesus the way of eternal life. He was eager, ardent and enthusiastic.

He was reverent. This is apparent in his action and attitude. He knelt before Jesus and addressed Him as "Good Master." He was respectful. The question implied Christ's authority and wisdom. *He was intelligent.* What he wished was definitely before his mind; his thrift had prepared him to think of the object he sought with some degree of knowledge. The word "inherit" implies something different from the word "have" or "possess." *He was courteous.* He bowed before the Great Teacher and thereby showed his courtesy. This was suitable deportment that was due to one of higher rank. He had a consideration for

the thought, feelings and position which Jesus occupied. There was no rudeness in him like that manifested so frequently by the Sadducees, Herodians and Pharisees.

He was a ruler of the Jews. A man of authority, the chief man in the synagogue and perhaps in the community. He was a young man of good character. Outwardly at least he kept the commandments; he was so amiable and possessed of so many good qualities that when Jesus saw him He said He loved him; He loved the good that was in him.

He was a good moral man. Christ did not charge him with hypocrisy or any common vices. The young man rather admitted that he had done more than the requirements of the Jewish Decalogue. He was rich enough to indulge in evil propensities, but was outwardly pure and without reproach. There is nothing said about any sinful habits that he indulged or any profligacy attached to his life.

He came with an earnest question—"What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He does not ask what shall I do to gain wealth or pleasure or fame, but to inherit eternal life? A question of vast importance, a question that represents one of the deepest cravings of the human heart. It is a question not only written in the Gospels, but written in all religions and upon all the philosophies, poetries and mysteries of humanity. It is a question that is commanding the thought of the ages; it is as old as man; it is as manifold as human experience and it is as abiding as man's need. It is the young man's question; it is our question; it is the most important and incomparable question that our souls can ask; a question that should claim the attention of our minds. What shall I do to inherit

eternal life? This implied a real existence, a distinct consciousness and activity. It implies an existence beyond this life, an existence removed from the imperfections of the present time. The young man's notion of immortality may have been crude, but he had an idea of it and an earnest desire to obtain it. It implies a life in relation to the spiritual system. He did not mean mere endlessness, but rather endless goodness and truth, and to be in harmony with what these qualities will give, not only endless existence, but full enjoyment of the increase in goodness, love and truth. He wants to know what eternity is and what he may do to inherit it, what is the plus yet to be possessed that he may inherit eternal life. This was an earnest question and a great question for this ruler of the Jews to bring to Jesus. He put the question to Jesus, who was unpopular to the rich and the rulers. His disciples were reviled. Nicodemus came by night and this young man may have had to face the scorn of his friends when he ran eagerly to Christ and humbly knelt before Him, beseeching Him to teach and guide him. But men are not saved by their good points, but by the right spirit and by right action. Notwithstanding his splendid character, his wealth and reverence and courtesy, Jesus did not display any special anxiety to add his respectability to the number of His disciples by adding this rich young ruler. Many preachers doubtless would have been keen to have prepared the way for his joining the church; they might have talked about the virtues, refinement, the good society, the social features of the congregation, but Christ's reply gives evidence that the wisest, the best, and the richest have to take up the cross and follow Him as well as the rest of mankind.

Christ's reply: He tests the young man. He tells him to keep the commandments. The young ruler replied that he had kept all of them from his youth up.

He then asks the second question, "What lack I yet?" He had kept all the commandments and yet there was one he had not kept. That looks contradictory, but it is true in actual life every day. A man may keep the commandments in letter and break them in spirit. A man may not be in church when his body is there; a man may be in the congregation of the righteous when his mind and heart are a thousand miles away. He may be under the sound of the sermon and at the same time transacting business that may have no relation to the teaching of Christ.

Jesus tests the young man and tells him if he would be perfect to sell what he had and give to the poor. He did this in love, yet in faithfulness. He asked him to prove his sincerity. He asked him to make a complete surrender; He asked him to follow Him. The young man may not have been actually called to sell his estate any more than Abraham was called to offer up Isaac, but the test of his will was made. Jesus demonstrated to the young man that in order to lay hold of eternal life it was not only necessary to keep the commandments, but to possess that spirit of love that would make him ready to yield everything to the Lord of life and if necessary to sell all that he had.

He was weighed in the balance and found wanting. He lacked one thing. He lacked the essential thing. It was a crisis in his career on which everything hung for all future. Do we blame him? Ah, is not this same test trying every one of us every day? And how many are caught up by all kinds of vanities? How many turn away from Christ? And what of us? How

few are willing to surrender all to Christ, take up the cross, deny ourselves and to follow the perfect Man.

He broke down under the test. It was a trying time. It may sometimes seem trifling to give up an amusement or pursuit of some peculiar affection, but Christ sometimes demands it. It is sometimes the test of the character and the trifle may be fraught with future destiny. A blessing to some may be a curse to others. The young man's countenance fell. There was grief and disappointment in him; there was indecision. He was unwilling to yield, and so are many today. He turned away. There were some serious defects in this rich young man. He expected salvation by works of the law. "What good thing must I do?" He was ignorant of the salvation that Christ brought to man. Men are saved by faith and not my works lest a man should boast. Saved men are rewarded by their works. He was held in bondage by one mighty idol. He loved his riches more than he loved God. He was guilty of idolatry. He was unwilling to obey Christ whom to obey means life eternal. He had the choice between the riches of this world and the riches of eternity. He made his choice, which every man and woman have to make.

It was a golden opportunity for the young man. It was a hard saying to him. The world was too strong for him. The door of opportunity opened and closed. Had he entered, who can tell what position he might have held in the circle of the apostles, in the mind of Jesus, in the records of the New Testament and in the memory of Christendom? Had he given not his admiration only, but his life to Christ, his heart and his possessions; had he left all and followed Him, results would have been different; but he appears like a

meteor, passes away and is heard of no more. Jesus demonstrated to the young man that he could not part with them, and thus the truth probed him. He was possessed of many admirable qualities, but one thing he lacked, one thing necessary to make him acceptable to God; one thing without which he could not enter into the kingdom of heaven. That one thing was love with its sacrifices. It was the one essential thing necessary for him to do in order to inherit eternal life. The sum and substance of his obedience to the commandments was love—love to God and love to man. Love to God with all the heart, soul and strength, and love to man as he loved himself. He had the golden chance of his life. Jesus was passing by and the opportunity came to the young man to accept Christ, to do the one thing necessary to do, but Jesus passed, the opportunity passed, and we hear no more of the rich young ruler. He turned away sorrowful, content to trust in riches, in the deceitfulness of riches which choked his desire for eternal life, which was within his grasp, but he grasped it not. It was a tide in his history which if embraced would have led him on to eternal goodness and truth, but his feet did not enter the straight way and travel the narrow path to eternal life. We learn some valuable lessons from this parable.

Opportunities come to inherit eternal life. What a call the young man had to the companionship of Christ, to discipleship, to treasures in heaven, perhaps to usefulness like Paul, to bliss like John, to activity like Peter, at any rate, to have an everlasting life. A crown was offered him which he refused. He looked through the case to see the glory with all of its possibilities, but, deluded man! he did not enter the gate. It was the opportunity of his life and, like Felix, who

trembled at Paul's preaching, but delayed until it was too late; like Herod, who thought of reforming under John the Baptist's preaching, but did not; like King Agrippa, who was almost persuaded to become a Christian, but did not; the young ruler let the opportunity pass, and with it, he passed from our view. Similar opportunities come to every one of us, and if we do not embrace them, they pass forever.

We learn the deceitfulness of riches. He was rich and he loved his riches more than he loved his God. Great riches increase the risk of losing eternal life and sometimes stand in the way of it. It is not the riches themselves that make the evil, but the *love* of them that is the root of all kinds of evil.

There may be a trust in riches when they are not actually possessed. A man is covetous when there is avariciousness in the soul. The deceitfulness and delusiveness of riches throw dust in the eyes and persuade many that there is some value in that which will soon pass away. It is hard for a man to give up this world for another. This world is seen, the higher world is unseen; this world gives immediate pleasure, the higher world may require sacrifice; hence Jesus said how hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God. The emphasis is on trust. There are rich men who are poor in spirit and who are faithful stewards of God's heritage. We should rejoice when riches fall into the hands of good men, because they will administer the riches in the love and fear of God. There is no wickedness in wealth and there is no merit in poverty, but if a man trusts in his riches, then it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man who trusts in his riches to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

And to illustrate the truth of Christ's teachings, He holds up to us the example of Dives, the rich young ruler and the barn-builder.

Morality is not sufficient to save man. Men may have fame and fortune, intellectual endowments, earthly comforts and conveniences, kind friends and happy homes; they may be amiable persons, possessing many good qualities; they may be frank and obliging, generous and liberal, hospitable and kind-hearted, upright and honourable in business life, good as sons, or husbands, or parents, and interested in good morals and yet may fall short of the kingdom of heaven. This is such a common excuse. As so many are occupying this ground, we desire to deal at some length with this character as it is represented in the rich young ruler.

Let us again invite your attention to this rich young ruler. He was possessed of many admirable qualities, was loved by the Lord, was a ruler and stood well in the community, but he fell short of doing the one thing necessary to save his soul and went away sorrowful. We have another example in Nicodemus; he was a good man and belonged to that large class of moral men. He was a man of authority—a ruler of the Jews. He came to Jesus with questions. Jesus said to him, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus did not understand it and asked how a man could be born again; how he could enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born? Jesus informed him he must be born of the water and the spirit—the necessity of a two-fold birth. Nicodemus was not in the kingdom of God; in order to get into the kingdom of God *he must be born again*. Examine the position of Cornelius as recorded in the ninth chapter of Acts. He was the captain of a Roman

military band, at the head of a large household. We are told he was a good man, one that feared God, one that gave alms and one that prayed to God—four noble traits of character, as noble a man as the young ruler or as Nicodemus, as noble as any man found outside of the Church of Christ, and yet with all these noble traits, Cornelius was an unsaved man, and the angel of the Lord directed him to send for one, Peter, who would tell him what he ought to do. Cornelius acted upon this suggestion and when Peter came he spoke unto him words which were obeyed and saved Cornelius and his household. Now, if Cornelius, being such a good man, was in an unsaved state, are not others who have never obeyed the Word of God also in an unsaved state? If it was necessary for Cornelius, a devout, charitable, praying man, to accept Christ and to obey Christ, is it not also necessary for all these good moral men outside of Christ to do likewise? We call your attention to some passages of Scripture which sustain and vindicate this position. The Great Commission: Christ said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." In this proclamation He did not except any nationality or class of people. He did not intimate that there were those who were sufficiently good without obeying the Gospel, or who needed no regeneration, but they were to preach the Gospel to every creature regardless of their past life or character. They were to go into the highways and byways and bid all, bad and good, moral and immoral to come in to the feast. The promises of God are all conditional upon our compliance with the requirements of the Lord. These promises include remis-

sion of sins. And Peter said unto them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2: 38).

Eternal life is another promise. Christ is the author of eternal life to all who obey Him. Jesus tells us that if a man will enter the door of the sheepfold any other way he is a thief and a robber. But, says someone, I am as good as the church members; I pay my honest debts, I attend to my business, I never have wronged anyone; I give to the church; I give to the poor and needy; I have no bad habits, but, let me say unto you, it is not a question of your honesty and sincerity, but a question of what saith the Lord. It is not a question of your morality, but a question of the authority of Christ. The claim to be as good as the church member is no argument in favour of the moralist's salvation. Because there are hypocrites in the church is no reason to believe the Lord is going to save a sinner in the neglect of his duty. Sometimes we hear, "There is no difference between the church and the world," that "The average man of the world is as good as the average man of the church." Then, if there is no difference between the church and the world, the world would be just as well off without the church as with it. This is a conclusion to which no honest man can come. Jesus declares, "Ye are the salt of the earth," and "The light of the world," and Christ's authority on this subject is better than the testimony of men and of angels. Look at the darkness and superstition which reigns where the church is not. Who would desire such darkness to settle down upon America? The very people who believe that there is no difference between the church and the world would not, under

any consideration, live where there were no churches. We admit there are good people outside of the church, and these people are made good by the church. They are walking by the light which others are carrying. Two men may walk home from church through the darkness and one carry a lantern and the other walk alongside the light-bearer and enjoy the benefit of the light. And so these good moral people have no light of their own to guide them, but are walking by the light of others. In communities and towns where there are strong churches and good healthy Christian life, the moral condition of the people outside of the church is far superior to the morals of those living where there are weak churches. Men may say, "I am not good enough." "Have I not helped the poor?" "Have I not given for every good cause?" Yes, your goodness is good as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. A ship stands in the harbour that is well built with engine, masts, sails, pilot wheel, rudder and all, but who would enter upon that ship and start on a voyage without the captain?

A man undertakes to jump across a chasm that is ten feet wide, but he only jumps eight feet. What is the result? He falls into the chasm. The captain lets out the anchor from the ship, it goes within ten feet of the bottom, but does not touch. Of what benefit is that anchor? A man frames his building, makes his mortises and then finds that his joists are two inches short, and when the architect reproves him for his neglectful work, he declares that it is good as far as it goes. Yes, but the whole thing is rejected because it does not go far enough. A garden may be well laid out with straight lines and curves, terraces arranged with artistic taste, but if no seed is sown, it would be lacking the

main thing. The machinery of an engine may be perfect, the cylinders and valves in splendid order, but there is no steam on; the traveller would say, "One thing thou lackest." The watch may have a golden case, beautiful gems, hands delicately made, everything there but the mainspring, and he who inquires the time would say, "One thing thou lackest." The one thing that the unsaved is lacking is as necessary as the seed for the garden, the steam to the engine and the mainspring to the watch, and that one thing is salvation from sin.

You may board a railway train and when the conductor comes around and asks for the ticket you may show him a beautiful address card, or wedding card, or visiting card, but they will not do for transportation and you will have to pay or get off, because you are lacking in one thing, and that one thing is the ticket, and that one thing is necessary, for it represents law, order, authority and passage. And so, my dear traveller, if you would travel safely through the gates of heaven you must possess the *one essential thing, and that is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and obedience to his will.*

Some years ago there was a disastrous fire in the top story of a tall building in Cincinnati, Ohio; the firemen came and ran up the ladders, but they did not reach far enough and some who were working in the top story perished in the flames; the ladders were good as far as they went, but they did not go far enough.

And so it is with morality. It does not go far enough, but Christianity includes all that there is in morality, and it includes much more, it makes a man the child of God, it gives to him the assurance of Heaven; it brings the believer to God. Oh, thou who

art relying upon your good works, know you not that when you are repudiating the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, you are trampling under foot His blood and "crucifying him afresh"? Know you not that though you are very near the kingdom, you are not in the kingdom? Know you not when Christ comes if you are not ready the doors will be shut?

There are church members who may ask this question: "What lack I yet?" It may be some lack a sincere devotion to God's service, a devotion that will cause them to deny themselves trifling and inconsiderate things in order to serve the Master. I have seen a devotion on the part of some church members to things of the world that made the weather appear so bad on Sundays that they could not go to the house of God, but could go on week-days to business and parties in much worse weather. I have seen a devotion on the part of church members to go to shows that would keep them sitting in crowds, in stifling air for hours, but who would fairly faint from exhaustion in the house of God in less than one hour. True devotion will make us more willing to serve God than to curry favour of the world. True devotion will constrain us to spend more for God's kingdom than for ribbons, gewgaws, chewing-gum, tobacco and shows.

When we speak of devotion to home and business, the word is understood, but when we speak of devotion to Christ and the Church then some people seem to not understand its meaning.

Some may be lacking in the spirit of prayer. You may say prayers, but should say them in the right spirit and not in a formal and indifferent way. There is a prayer that the Lord never hears, for He said, "Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter the

kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father in heaven."

Some may be lacking in stewardship: Some seem to not realize that the Lord has given them certain talents and He will come some day and ask an accounting. Many seem to forget that the Lord has appointed a work for all and given gifts to all and will surely demand the use of the gifts some day, and Oh, what a disappointment if He would say, "Thou wicked and slothful servant, why didst thou not put thy talent to use?" Some may lack patience and longsuffering with their friends and loved ones. Some may lack perseverance, and if so, you must look to the Lord and learn of Him, for He was longsuffering with His disciples and forgave their slowness to believe the Scriptures.

In conclusion, to you who are not Christians, you may be near the kingdom, you may have many excellent qualities, you may have good social virtues, you may read the Bible and know what to do to be saved, you may have respect for things divine, you may give to the church and to benevolent institutions, you may stand well in the city, but ask yourself the question in the sight of Christ, if you are not lacking in the essential thing to save your soul? All a blind man lacks from seeing is his eyesight, all a deaf man lacks from hearing is the sense of hearing, all a poor man lacks from being wealthy is riches, and all you lack from being a Christian is salvation through Christ, whose eyes are as a flame of fire and who searches the hearts of all men. Ask Him, and He will tell you that you are lacking in saving faith, in true repentance, in sincere obedience, in a whole-hearted devotion to the kingdom of heaven. Then why delay your salvation?

Forsake the example of the rich young ruler who turned away from Christ. On that great day, what will be the depth of his remorse when he will turn away from Christ, from heaven and all the joys that belong to the eternal life of which he made an inquiry?

THE QUESTION OF THE CHRIST

What think ye of the Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David.—MATTHEW 22: 42.

THE Pharisees had put many questions to Jesus. They asked Him, saying, "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" They believed that Moses had given them three hundred and sixty-five commandments, corresponding to the number of days in the year, and that he had given them two hundred and forty-eight prohibitions. They were very exact as to the numbers. They had many disputes as to which entailed the more sin, this or that commandment. Some maintained that the ceremonial ordinances were more important than the moral commands. Others claimed that the ceremonial precepts were secondary to the moral law. Upon these subjects the Scribes and lawyers wrangled and disputed. Jesus replied to their question as to which is the greatest commandment by saying, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and greatest commandment and the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Jesus, having answered the question, pushes on to a more vital question, and asks them, "What think ye of Christ, whose son is he?" What do you, the teachers of the people and the interpreters of the Scriptures, say concerning

the Messiah. Jesus puts this question to a representative assembly—Herodians, Sadducees, Scribes, and Pharisees, in addition to His disciples and the people. In proposing this question, Jesus proves the folly of those who by subtle methods were trying to disprove His wisdom. He will show them in turn their ignorance of the prophecies and the real purpose of their question. They reply to Him, "The Son of David." He saith unto them, "How doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, the Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is He his son?" And no man was able to answer him a word; neither doth any man from that day forth ask Him questions. They were silenced by His wisdom, and the incisiveness of His rebuke. They expected the "Son of God" to be called the son of David because He was to be "a rod out of Jesse." The Lord swore unto David that He would establish his seed forever and establish His throne throughout all generations.

This question that so seriously disturbed the Pharisees and silenced them should seriously concern us. "What think ye of Christ?" As we think of Him, so we shall act; for thoughts precede action. The heavens and the earth were thoughts in the mind of God before they were created. Man and his redemption were in the mind of God before the creation of man. The great achievements of men began in thought. The great books that have been written were once thoughts in the minds of their authors. The great inventions of the world were once thoughts in the minds of the inventors. The railroads that cross our land, the steamboats that ply the waters of the ocean, the great bridges that span our mighty rivers, and the great

buildings of our cities were once thoughts in the minds of the men who projected those enterprises. The mean and ignoble deeds that have been committed were first conceived in the silent recesses of the brain. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." God judges men according to their thoughts. Jesus taught, "Those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man." For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies, these are the things which defile a man," and God will judge us accordingly. Paul declares those who do these things shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. "Thou Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men." "He searcheth all hearts." "I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them." "I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." No thought, however secret to the knowledge of man, can be hidden from God. If actions are preceded by thoughts, if God judges us according to our thoughts, is it not important that we bring our thoughts into subjection to the will of Christ? It will aid us in forming just, righteous and unprejudiced thoughts of Christ, to know what His enemies thought of Him, what His friends thought of Him, and then study His life and teachings ourselves that we may form our own judgment of Him.

What did His enemies think of Him when He moved amongst men? The Pharisees were enemies of Jesus. Many of the best educated Jews were amongst the Pharisees. They disliked Christ. They looked upon the advancement of His kingdom with enmity and jealousy. They tried to catch Him in snares by putting

subtle and puzzling questions to Him. What did they think of Him? They say, "As for Moses and the prophets, we know from whence they are, but as for this Jesus, we know him not. He eateth with publicans and sinners." They thought this a serious objection to Him. But for this reason we love Him. Great men before Christ looked with contempt upon the poor. Socrates spent his days in public discussions, but Jesus went amongst the publicans and sinners doing good. Plato thought it degrading to descend to the practical details of life. Seneca says, "No philosopher will invent useful things; this is only drudgery for slaves." But Christ came to serve and to minister, to give His life a ransom for many.

Caiaphas was an enemy of Jesus. The exaltation of Christ meant the downfall of Caiaphas. Caiaphas was the high priest. He headed the conspiracy against Christ. He thought Christ was a blasphemer because He said He was the Son of God, and that He would come in the clouds with holy angels. But we love Jesus because He is the Son of God and will come again for "His jewels."

Pilate was an enemy of Jesus. Pilate was the governor of Judea; a man of name, fortune and position. He was an enemy of the Jews. He examined Christ and gave to the world his opinion of Him: "I find no fault in him." Says Pilate's wife, "Have nothing to do with that just man." The centurion that crucified Him says, "Truly he is righteous; truly he is the Son of God." The thief by His side said, "He hath done nothing amiss." And when the demons saw Him they cried out, "What have we to do with thee, thou Holy One of Israel?" Thus we see that His enemies who knew Him when He was amongst men could find no

just reason for condemning Him—could find no fault in Him.

Let us examine the testimony of some of the infidels who have lived since the days of Christ, and see what they think of Him. From Tacitus and Pliny, of the first century, to Payne and Ingersoll, of the last century, we find that no infidel has a word to say against the character of Jesus. Though they make war against Moses and the Old Testament, though they make war against creeds and theology, though they make war against sects and dogmas, yet, with one accord, they pronounce Jesus “a hero,” “an able teacher,” and “a man of exalted character.” Rosseau says, “If the life and death of Socrates are those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God!” Rictor says, “Jesus is the purest among the mighty and the mightiest among the pure, who, with His pierced hand has raised empires from their foundations, turned the stream of history from its old channel, and still continues to rule and guide the ages.” Renan, the great French infidel, says: “Whatever be the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed. His worship will go on without ceasing. His legend will call forth tears without end. His suffering will melt the noblest hearts. All ages will proclaim that among the sons of men there is none born greater than Jesus.” Ingersoll admitted that Jesus was a “perfect gentleman.” Thus we see the infidels think Jesus is a perfect type of virtue and moral beauty—a man of genius and noble heart.

What do His friends think of Him? Turning from His enemies, let us examine the testimony of His friends and see what they think of Him. What did God think of Him? When Christ was ascending from

the waters of baptism the heavens were opened and a voice was heard to say, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." God calls Jesus His elect, His chosen, and His well beloved Son. He was pleased with His character, with His teachings, and with the work that He was to do.

Angels are friends of Jesus. Christ in the flesh was seen by the angels. The things in the Gospel, the angels desired to look into. When Christ came into the world angels came with Him. A multitude of angels were seen and heard, singing the only song ever sung by angels on earth, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will to men." Angels watched over Him during His life; they ministered to Him after His temptation; comforted Him in the Garden of Gethsemane; they were the first to behold the risen Lord; they ushered Him up to heaven.

John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus, who preached repentance with such power that he made Herod tremble, said of Jesus: "Behold, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." "One cometh after me who is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to unlatch."

Thomas was a friend of Jesus, but he doubted His resurrection. He would not believe the apostles and declared that in order to believe Christ had risen he must put his fingers into the nail-prints in His hands. On the next Lord's Day Jesus appeared, and called unto Thomas, and said: "Thomas, reach hither thy finger and put it in the nail-prints in my hands and thrust thy hands into my pierced side and be not faithless, but believing." Said Thomas, "My Lord, and my God! "

Peter, one of the pillars of the Church, and fre-

quently the spokesman for the apostles, gave his testimony in no uncertain terms. When Christ came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Whom say ye that I am?" Peter replies, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!"

Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles, thought so well of Christ that he said, "I count all things but dross for the sake of winning Christ. "I am determined to know nothing save Christ and him crucified." "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Christ." "I know him in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that great day."

Amongst the common people, Martha thought Jesus was the Messiah that was to come into the world. The leper thought the Lord could make him clean. What did the mothers think of Jesus who carried their little children to Him to be blessed? I wonder what the multitude thought of Him when He fed them with the few loaves and fishes? I wonder what the common people thought of Him, who heard Him gladly? I wonder what the martyrs thought of Him, who, because of their faith in Him, were put upon the rack, dragged through cities behind carts, dashed down from towers upon the rocks beneath, thrown into the sea, run through with the lance, nailed to the cross, flayed alive, starved to death, doomed to die in dungeons, to be torn to pieces by wild beasts, and to be burned at the stake? Their minds must have been filled with thoughts about Jesus, and their hearts must have overflowed with the love of Christ.

What have the centuries of Christianity thought of Jesus? Have they not testified that this Jesus of Nazareth, "without money and arms, has conquered

more millions than Alexander, Cæsar, Mohammed and Napoleon; without science and learning, has shed more light on things human and divine than all philosophers and scholars combined; without the eloquence of schools, He spoke such words of life as were never spoken before nor since, and produced effects which lie beyond the reach of any orator or poet; without writing a single line, He set more pens in motion and furnished themes for more sermons, orations, discussions, works of learning and art, and sweet songs of praise, than the whole army of great men of ancient and modern times? ”

What think ye of Christ? We have seen what the enemies and friends of Christ think of Him. We next ask, what do you think of Him? I do not ask what you think of this or that church, nor what you think of this or that preacher, of this or that creed, or of this or that political party, but what do you think of Christ? Some of you may not think of Him at all. Some may think meanly of Him. But those who believe think He is most precious.

What think ye of the sonship of Christ? He is the son of David. The covenant of God was established with David. The Messiah should appear in his line. And according to the Bible genealogy of Christ, Mary was of the lineage of the house of David. He is the Son of God. David in the spirit called Him Lord. He was David's Lord before he became his son. Thus He is declared to be Divine. As the son of David His humanity was real. As the Lord of David His divinity is evident. Thus He is qualified to be the one Mediator between God and man.

The Son of Man and the Son of God. A divine man, bleeding on the cross and yet exalted upon the throne;

wearing a crown of thorns, and a crown of universal monarchy; Sonship and Lordship blended together; Son of David by natural descent and Son of God by nature and essence. He is the man Christ and the God Christ. In character absolutely perfect, unique, complete and immaculate.

What think ye of His Christship? As the Sonship is a rule of nature, the Christship is a titled office. He is our Father. In His character as teacher He silenced the gainsaying of His enemies. He speaks as never man spake in making known the living God to us. As the Christ He is our Priest. His Priesthood is royal; it was made with an oath. It is a Priesthood in the heavens. He is our great High Priest, who offered Himself a sacrifice for us. As Christ He is our King; He is the King of Glory. He is sitting on the right hand of God, and that implies regal power. His rule is spiritual. His kingdom is a heavenly one. As King He subdues and conquers His enemies by love, and those who refuse the rule of love will feel the rod of iron.

What do you think of Christ's love? "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." But while we were sinners, Christ died for us. The godly for the ungodly. "He loved me and gave himself for me." His whole mission was an errand of love. "Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor that through his poverty ye might be made rich." What do you think of Him, emptying Himself of His glory and being found in the fashion of men—of taking our nature upon Him, of wearing flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone?

What do you think of His sufferings? The Bible says, "Christ suffered for us." His sufferings were

unparalleled. He suffered poverty; the child of a poor virgin; the manger in which He was born was not His own; the colt on which He rode into Jerusalem belonged to another; the room in which He instituted the Lord's Supper belonged to another; the birds had their nests, the sheep their pastures, the lions their lairs and the foxes their dens, but the Son of Man had nowhere to lay His head. He suffered insults and abuses without number; His reputation maligned; His works ascribed to the power of Beelzebub. He was despised and rejected by men; He was blindfolded, spit upon, smitten in the face, scourged on the back, and mocked by the multitude. He suffered untold agonies in the Garden. Onset after onset came, one after another, until He was bowed with great grief and crying. The iniquities of a guilty race and the sins of a wicked world were upon Him; from the depths of His soul came the cry, "Oh, my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

He suffered on the Cross. Because of our iniquities He was nailed to the tree. The curse of the sins of the race was upon Him in physical, mental and spiritual sufferings—even His friends and His Father seemed to have turned their faces from Him.

What do you think of His resurrection? The grave could not hold Him. On the morn of the third day the earth trembled, the rocks were rent, the soldiers trembled, the angels of the Lord descended, the seal was broken, the rock was rolled away, and Christ came forth. He came forth a victor. He came forth triumphant over Satan, death and hades. Hundreds of witnesses testified to His resurrection.

What do you think of His ascension? Forty days

after His resurrection He took His disciples out to the brow of Olivet, and after pronouncing a blessing upon them and giving them the command "to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all the people, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit," He ascended to the right hand of God, where He was crowned with glory and honour.

What do you think of Him as a Saviour? He comes as a living personal Saviour. Every religion must be judged by its power to save the lost. A religion that has no Saviour is useless for this world. In this respect Jesus stands alone. Do you think His errand was necessary? Was there any reason for His coming? It is said He came "to seek and to save the lost." He came to save men from their sins. Was a Saviour necessary in your case? Have you sins from which you can make no atonement? If you say you have no sins, then you will need no Christ. And of all such John says, "If any man say he sins not, he is a liar." Do you say you are righteous, then you need no Saviour, for Jesus came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. He came to redeem men not simply by the atonement secured by His death but the redemption of human character and human life that follow upon His influence. God exalted Him and made Him a Prince and Saviour of men. What do you think of Him moving amongst men, melting the hearts of millions by the Cross, winning the souls of millions by His matchless love, teaching the nations by His treasures of knowledge and wisdom, atoning for the sins of the vilest men, regenerating communities and conquering the mightiest of men by His simplicity and power? What do you think of His comforting the sorrowing, healing the sick, giving joy to the mourn-

ing, loosening the captive, binding up the broken-hearted, cheering the faint, heaping coals of fire upon the heads of His enemies, and bringing life and immortality to light throughout the nations?

“What think ye of Christ?” This is His question and not mine. How can you help but think well of Him who suffered and died for you? You should think well of Him that you may think well of the Father; He and the Father are one. You should think well of Him that you may think rightly of yourselves. Think of your light, your truth, your love, your words and your deeds in the light of Christ, and not by comparing them with those of your fellow-men. You should think well of Christ in order that you may think upon “whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report.” You should think well of Christ that you may have the right views of life, death and eternity; man, sin and redemption. You should think well of Him that your lives may be bright and shining lights in the world. According as you think, so you are. If you are right in thought you will be right in action. You should think well of Him in order that He may think well of you. “Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me will be lightly esteemed.” “I love them that love me.” He that confesses me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven.” You should think well of Him that He may think well of you on the day of judgment and throughout an eternity of joy and glory.

Are there some present who have never given a thought to Jesus? You have thought of other things, why not think of Christ and the salvation He has for

you. You have thought of pleasure, of education, of business, of fashion, of your home, of your associates and of success in life. Better think of Christ to the neglect of these things than to think of these things to the neglect of Christ. "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." Why not give some thought to Jesus? Why not think of His life, His teachings, His love, His sufferings and His redemption? If you think well of Christ, crystallize your thoughts into action and confess Him as the Son of God and Saviour of the world, that He may own you before the Father and throughout the world to come.

LOVE FOR THE MASTER

Lovest thou me?—JOHN 21: 15-17.

SO when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

“He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

“He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.”

Love, the inspiraiton of service. This last chapter of John's Gospel seems to be a kind of postscript that he added after having written the Gospel and rolled up the scroll, and then thinking over what was written, this beautiful story about the Lord's conversation with Simon Peter came to his mind.

Let us for a moment pay attention to the thirtieth and thirty-first verses of the preceding chapter: “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But

these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, you might have life through His name." Thus he sets forth the purpose of writing the Gospel. Much was omitted, but what was written by this beloved apostle set forth the chief purpose, not only of his Gospel, but of all of the Gospels, as well as the entire Scriptures, declaring that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Jesus, that blessed Name, the name given to Him by the angels, the Name by which His mother called Him when He was a child, the Name by which He was known as a youth in the synagogue and temple; the Name by which He was known as a carpenter, the Name by which He was known by His relatives and friends in Nazareth. John uses this name in telling what Jesus said and did; thus Jesus taught; Jesus healed; Jesus walked; Jesus prayed; Jesus loved His own; etc. It was not an uncommon name; it appeared in history; and thus He was designated by a common, historic, human name. John declared, "This Jesus is the Christ, the promised Messiah, the one of whom Moses and the prophets spoke, the star of David, the Sceptre, the Shiloh, the Branch, the Prophet, Priest and King. *This Jesus is the Son of God*; the Messiah who is to come, was to be the Son of God, so prophesied; Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, and for so claiming He was accused of blasphemy.

Therefore the purpose of writing the Gospel is set forth in the closing of the twentieth chapter of John. This purpose to prove that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, appeared in the apostolic preaching as the force of their argument; as the foundation of the Church; and that faith in it was required in the confession of those who believed it; the consequence of

these statements is also expressed in John's words that ye might believe unto everlasting life. Coming down through the ages, the Church is the result of it and the progress of the Kingdom of Heaven depends upon the declaration of this statement; faith in its import, and the advocacy and contention of it.

The occasion of this conversation between Jesus and Simon. It was early in the morning, the sun was lifting its beams over the eastern horizon; the darkness was passing away; the mists were clearing from the lake; the fishermen had been toiling all night and were making for the shore. A man was seen standing near the edge of the sea, and as the boat approached, the disciples discerned it was Jesus, who inquired of them if they had caught anything, to which they replied that they had toiled all night and caught nothing. And He said unto them, "Cast the net on the right side of the ship and ye shall find." "They cast, therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes." Simon Peter, knowing it was the Lord, cast himself into the sea and the other disciples came on, dragging the net with fishes, and when they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals and fish laid thereon; and bread. Jesus saith unto them, "Come and dine, and none asked Him, Who art Thou, for they knew it was the Lord." After they had dined, occurred this beautiful conversation between Christ and Simon Peter.

Note the language, *three questions, three answers and three commands*. Jesus uses the term, "Simon, son of Jonas," the old name Simon instead of the new name Peter, was suggestive, Simon bearing to the name "Peter," the same as Jacob, the supplanter, bore to Israel. Around the name "Simon" seemed to appear

the weaknesses and frailty of the character of the man, while around the name Peter there were gathering strength and a rock-like character. Therefore, the use of the old name must have touched the heart of Peter and brought to him humiliation, shame and sorrow. Each question has a peculiar significance, there being a slight change in the verbs and once in the phraseology.

“Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?” Simon’s declarations of faithfulness and friendship prior to the crucifixion of Christ were of such a character as to appear that he loved Jesus more than any of the other disciples. Note his threefold profession, “Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.” “I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and to death.” “Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.” Thus did Peter boast of his loyalty to Christ. One would think though all deserted Jesus, Simon Peter would be faithful. He would have resented any thought of loving Jesus less than any other disciple. He would have been humiliated if any disciple would have accused him of less loyalty and love than the rest of them. And now that he had denied Jesus, and denied Him thrice; denied Him in the presence of the maid-servants; denied Him in the infamous court of Caiaphas; denied Him with oaths; denied Him when Jesus needed his friendship the most; therefore, the threefold question, “Lovest thou me?” must have been a thrust to the memory and heart of Simon.

The question is not “Believest thou me?”, or “Understandest thou me?”, or “Servest thou me?”; it is not “Are you sorry for what you have done?”; it is not “Simon, how about your professed loyalty?”; it

is not "Art thou ashamed of thyself?", or "Will you deny me again?"; but it is the tender, loving question, "Lovest thou me?", to which Simon replied, "Yea, Lord, thou knowest I love thee," and Jesus said unto him, "Feed my lambs." That is, feed my little sheep. Lead, protect, guide and heal them; bind up the broken-hearted; heal the bruised; strengthen the feeble. The second time Jesus saith unto him, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" He saith unto him, "Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep." Shepherd my sheep; all the sheep to be cared for; much vigilance needed; the strong and wise ones to be fed; the full-grown to be tended and guided.

Once more Christ said to him, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" This time Peter was much grieved because he said unto him the third time, "Lovest thou me?" What must have been the thoughts of Simon Peter? Doubtless his mind was flooded with memories of the past, especially the threefold denial of Jesus. I imagine he could have said, "Yea, Lord, I know not what I can promise for the future; I am deeply grieved over the past; over my denial of Thee, thrice and with an oath, at the time of your sore trial. I know I professed great loyalty, and that I would never be offended because of Thee; I know not what the future has in store for me; I may fall again; I may deny Thee again; I may be guilty of treason; I may be guilty of adultery; I may commit murder; but, Lord, Thou knowest my heart; Thou knowest that I love Thee," to which Jesus again replied, "Feed my sheep."

This conversation, containing these three questions, three answers and three commands, shows that love is the inspiration of service.

Love is first. The first and greatest commandment is to love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, and heart and strength. Love is fundamental; it is the very essence of the Gospel. God is love and we love Him because He first loved us. Love is what brought Christ from heaven to earth. "He loved me and gave himself for me" is Paul's affirmation that is reiterated by every Christian. Love binds earth to heaven; love is stronger than death. "Now abideth faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these is love."

"My son, give me thy heart." No other religion has this prevailing love that Christ has and demands of His followers. Pharisaism says, "Give me ritualism;" philosophy says, "Give me reason;" Hinduism says, "Give me asceticism;" Mohammedanism says, "Give me the sword;" but Christianity says, "Give me thine heart." It is the root and foundation of the Gospel. It is the binding bond between man and God. God is the all-pervading lover of the universe. He gave expression to that love in sending His only begotten Son to live and die for us. Jesus declares that He loves His own. It is a fatherly, everlasting, sacrificial love.

"Lovest thou me?" is the question asked by mother nature, and if we answer it in the affirmative, it means that we shall use wisely and not abuse the gifts of nature. "Lovest thou me?" is the question asked in the social life, and if we answer it in the affirmative, it means that we shall use lovingly and wisely our fellow-beings, and not abuse and misuse and rob them. "Lovest thou me?" is the question asked in the home, and without it there may be family feuds, isolation, pride and greed.

Love is reciprocal; love begets love as life begets

life, and friendship wins friends. Jesus loved Simon and that won the love of Simon. If we love anyone dearly, we desire to have our love reciprocated. Jesus loved His disciples so deeply that the love was answered by their love. For Him and for His service, which blossomed out in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, wherein Paul makes the great declaration that without love, his faith, his speech, his alms, would profit him nothing.

Service is the natural expression of love. It is the proof of love. Simon was to give evidence of his love by feeding the sheep. This he did. Whether on the day of Pentecost when he opened the kingdom in declaring in the presence of thousands that God had proclaimed Jesus both Lord and Christ; whether in Joppa when he restored to life Dorcas, in the presence of the weeping women; whether in the house of Cornelius when he opened the kingdom of God to the Gentiles; or whether throughout Asia Minor, in Pontus, or Bithynia, or Cappadocia, he was ever giving proof of his love by tearing down the strongholds of Satan, by planting the Cross of Christ and unfurling the Gospel banners to the world.

The lambs. No other religion takes cognizance of children like Christianity. The great religions of the world are deficient in this. Great books of the past have not dealt fairly with children, but Christ in His infinite love took the children up in His arms to bless them and set a child in the midst of His disciples and said, "Except ye become converted and as a little child, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." Again said He, "It is better that a millstone be tied about your necks, and cast into the depths of the sea, than to offend one of these little ones that believes on me."

Moses commanded to gather together men, women and children to hear the law and to learn of God. David said, "Come, ye children, hearken to me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord." Solomon said, "My son, forget not my law, but let thine heart keep my commandments, for length of days and long life and peace shall they add to thee." Paul commended Timothy for knowing the Scriptures from his youth. It was said of Jesus that He grew in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man. At the age of twelve He was found in the temple about His Father's business. "Remember thou thy creator in the days of thy youth" should be engraved upon the hearts of both parents and children, because it is the most convenient time, an act of supreme wisdom, and the best way to get started right. The words of Jesus to Simon, "Feed my lambs," should be the watchword of Christian parents, teachers and ministers.

Feed my sheep. The milk of the word for the young and feeble, the meat of the word for the middle-aged, strong and vigorous. The officers in the Church of Christ should give evidence of their love for their Lord and Master by tending the flock, as Paul wrote to Timothy to "Take heed to yourself and to the Church of God over which he was overseer."

Love is the one essential thing in doing the work of the Lord. It is the one trait of character that will bring joy to the heart and peace to the world. Man was made to love. Without this trait of character, life is void of usefulness and sunshine; without this the strangers are not taken in, the sick are not visited, the hungry are not fed, the thirsty are not watered, and none of the unfortunate are cared for. This is the strong tie which binds men together. This is the tie

that thrills the heart with joy; this is the tie which enables men to fight the world's battles; to endure suffering and the blasts of misfortune. For the love of home, men remain pure, and labour until they are fatigued. For the love of country, men go to war and shed their blood. For the love of the deaf and dumb, the blind, and the insane, men build asylums. For the love of the poor, men build almshouses. For the love of the orphans, men build and endow orphans' homes. For the love of liberty and protection, men frame laws and pay taxes. For the love of education, men build schoolhouses and employ teachers. For the love of the heathen, men send to them and support in their midst thousands of missionaries. For the love of God, men build churches and support preachers. The eternal law is, "Honour all men." "Love thy neighbour as thyself." "Weep with them that weep." "Rejoice with them that rejoice." The essence of life is love. The essence of Christianity is love. "God is love." Love is the one thing needful; it is the first and greatest commandment. Upon this hangs all the law and the prophets. This is obedience to Christ. He who loves, God dwells in his heart. It makes God his Father; binds earth to heaven. Love never fails. All personal achievements, all inventions, all intellectual masteries, all exploits, prophecies, tongues, and knowledge will fail and pass away, but love will never pass away. It will never fail. It will never cease. It will carry us through the storms and trials of life; through the valley and shadow of death; through the judgment, and into heaven. Then the last essential trait of character which we name is love. Love for the rich that they may not oppress the poor; love for the poor, that they be exalted; love for the hungry, that they may be fed;

love for the learned, that they may use their knowledge to educate humanity; love for the ignorant, that they may be trained up in the arts, science, religion, and literature of the world; love for the aged, that their last days may be the most comfortable of all; love for children, that they may be nurtured in the admonition of the Lord; love for the sick, that they may be nursed and healed; love for the drunkard, that he may be lifted out of the ditch and have his manhood restored to him; love for the vicious, that temperance may throb in their hearts; love for the unfortunate of the world, that they may be shielded until they reach the land where they shall see, and hear, and speak, and think and leap for joy; love for the savage, that they may be civilized; love for all who are out of God's vineyard, that they may return to holiness, to happiness, to heaven and to God.

THE SOURCE OF POWER

By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?—Acts 4: 7.

LUKE closes his Gospel with the promise of Christ to clothe the apostles with power. "And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city until ye be clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24: 49). In the beginning of The Acts he again records this promise. "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1: 8). The two narratives bind the two books together and show the importance of the promise; the one was made at the close of Christ's earthly life and the other at the beginning of His heavenly life.

By whom was the question asked and for what purpose? Peter and John had gone up to the temple to pray and, seeing a man lame from his mother's womb, laid at the gate which is called Beautiful, to ask alms, who, on seeing Peter and John, asked alms of them. Peter, looking on him, said, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have, give I thee; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." The lame man stood up and entered the temple, walking, leaping and praising God. This wonderful cure created a great impression on the people who knew the man, and they were amazed at the healing. When this was noised abroad, multitudes gathered around the apostles who preached unto them Christ and salvation through

Him. This miracle, and especially the teaching of the people, excited the envy of the priests, rulers, elders and scribes who desired to keep the people in the dark; but the apostles were commanded to preach the Gospel to every creature and to teach them the words of everlasting life; so Annas, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander and as many as were kindred of the high priest, gathered together in Jerusalem and in a tone of apparent contempt asked Peter and John, "By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?" They wanted to know the *modus operandi*; they wanted to turn the question into a philosophical inquiry instead of accepting the man as a concrete and indisputable fact of the healing and saving power that was bestowed upon him by the Lord Jesus Christ. The healing was recognized and admitted. The people recognized the source as being good and, therefore, it must be from God. The priests and rulers and elders were prejudiced and having killed Christ they now threatened the apostles and put this decoy question. Simon Peter, who before the resurrection of Christ and the baptism of the Holy Ghost had denied the Lord, now boldly affirms that it was by the power and "in the name of Jesus Christ whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even in him doth this man stand before you whole."

What was this power? It was not inherent in the apostles. They may have had intellect, talent, eloquence, wit and imagination as natural gifts, but this was not the source of the power that healed the man. It was not the result of education or force of will, but was a dynamic energy that came from above.

It was not intellectual power. The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. Paul said, "My speech

and preaching was not of enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power." The words and the wisdom he mentioned represented the system of teaching by the natural methods of men. The Grecian civilization at that time was noted for its intellectual development, and the apostle was making a marked distinction between intellectual attainments and the power that came from above. Knowledge is a power, and the Gospel is a luminary to guide the student in the quest of knowledge. But the power mentioned in the healing of this man was something more than the output of culture. I would not have you think for a minute that Christ withheld any blessing from the faculties of the mind, but we must look to another source for this power that inspired the apostles, healed the man and angered the elders and rulers of the people.

It was not a political power. During the Mosaic dispensation the religion of the Jews was closely allied with the government. During the dark ages the leaders of the dominant church claimed both temporal and spiritual power, but political power was not the essence of the Lord's promise to the apostles. The Church through its influence may become a blessing to the government, but the power that heals and saves and was promised by Christ was not political.

It was not a miraculous power. Our thoughts would naturally support this supposition because the apostles were endowed with the power to heal the sick, cast out demons and do many wonderful works. But the miracle was not the essence of the power that Christ promised, but rather a manifestation of it.

It was not a priestly power. Priests had exercised great power over the people before the coming of

Christ, and since, in many places have exercised a power over the people that has kept them in ignorance and superstition and deprived them of the very right that was God's design to purchase for them. But the promised power was not priestly.

It was not a ritualistic power. The eucharistic vestments, the use of books of forms, the proscribed manner of service with the numerous symbols may be used by those who like to depend upon them; but the power that was promised by Christ and was received by the apostles and abides in the Church did not flow from ritualistic service. Any person who so desires is at liberty to accept a service of this kind and to get on the ecclesiastical wagon and believe in popes, cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, and accept the whole system that had been drawn from pagan and Jewish temples, but a study of the Word of God would convince any unbiased man that the power promised did not flow from this source.

This power was promised in Isaiah 44: 3. "I will pour out my spirit upon thy seed and my blessing upon their offspring." It was also promised by Joel and referred to by the Apostle Peter in his great speech as recorded in the second chapter of Acts, wherein he quotes, "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith the Lord, I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams and on my servants and on my hand-maids in those days will I pour forth my spirit and they shall prophesy."

The Lord promised, as we have noted during His public ministry, the Holy Ghost would be sent unto them from the Father and that when He came He

would guide them into all truth, glorify His name, comfort them and endue them with power. This gift was symbolized by certain metaphors.

It is described as "wind." You know what wind is; it is gentle as the evening zephyrs and its power is manifest in the tempest. Even so the Spirit of God may speak tenderly to the heart of a little child and it may move with power to bring strong men to repentance. The wind moves the atmosphere, drives away miasmatic influences, and brings life and health to man; and so the spirit of God brings spiritual life and health to man. The wind has a winnowing effect to separate the chaff from the grain and so the Spirit of God separates the false from the true; the wicked from the righteous.

The Spirit of God was promised as fire. Fire produces heat and so the Holy Spirit is designed to inflame our hearts with love to God. Fire is to purify, and so the Spirit of God comes as a purifying fire and is manifest in the experiences of life in separating the dross from the pure. Fire is to make light, and so the Spirit of God comes to enlighten us and to shed its rays of light through the region of darkness. Other metaphors and symbols are used, such as oil that invigorates, water that refreshes and stimulates growth and finally symbolized in the dove as peaceful and gentle.

They were to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. Jerusalem, the capital city of the Jewish people; Jerusalem, the home of prophet, priest and king; Jerusalem, so sacred in Bible song and story; Jerusalem, that had been the centre of God's chosen people and the site of the temple; Jerusalem, where Jesus had been crucified and risen from the dead, was to be the place where the apostles

were to assemble and wait for the coming of this power. They were not to become impatient, but to wait upon God; and while they waited, they prayed; prayer, so essential in worship, was the great recourse of the apostles and the expression of their worship during the days of waiting for the fulfillment of the promise. Thus were they prepared by waiting and communing with God for the promise of this power. Ten days after Christ's ascension as recorded in the second chapter of The Acts, the apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit and became the recipients of this promised power.

It was an immense accession of power to give them light and wisdom and divine enduement for their mission. They were not sufficient in themselves, for without Christ they could do nothing. They were endued with power; the word means "clothed," such expression as you read elsewhere, "clothed with zeal," "clothed with majesty;" thus they were clothed with power, with the gift that wraps them in dignity and fills their hearts with a new life communicated from above that has come to dwell in them. It was an inner power, a spiritual power, a conscious power, that transformed them and vitalized them for the work they were to do. This power opened their eyes, quickened their memories, inspired their minds and warmed their hearts, and supplied their insufficiency for the work that Christ had commissioned them to do. They seemed to be transfigured; no longer are they seeking position of place and power at the side of Christ; no longer are they coveting honours; no longer are they desirous of having an earthly kingdom restored, because they are now blessed with an inner power that opens up the heavenly kingdom and the everlasting world.

It was a moral change that took place in their lives. It was at once demonstrated by attestation works. The multitude that witnessed this baptism in the Holy Ghost heard the sound and saw the fire, were amazed. They were confounded to hear them speak in the very language in which people from sixteen nations were born and had come to Jerusalem to worship. These men who had suddenly been transformed by this baptismal power were able to demonstrate their gifts and support their missions by divers signs and miracles, such as healing the sick, casting out demons and raising the dead. This promise of power was fulfilled in the Apostle Peter who, before this divine gift, was weak and vacillating, but now like a man of war; before, his tongue spoke denials and lies, but now is clothed with heavenly eloquence that thunders against the ramparts of sin; before, he followed Christ afar off, but now stands firm in making known His resurrection; before, he sheathed his sword, but now draws the sword of the spirit never to be sheathed again; before, he denied Jesus, but now, before the highest tribunal of the Jews, he says "This Jesus whom ye crucified, whom God hath raised from the dead has been made both Lord and Christ." Instead of quailing before their power and refusing to answer their questions he declares it was by the power and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ that this man is made whole. The rulers and priests had often quoted the names of the patriarchs, Moses and the prophets, and Peter knew the use and importance of names amongst the Jews, so he declares that this healing was done in the name of Jesus and added that it is the only name given under heaven amongst men that has salvation through which we are saved. Peter, filled with this holy fire, forgets his

danger, hazards his life and accuses the priests openly of killing the Holy One of God. Is it possible this is the same man whose courage failed him before a servant girl and who cursed and denied Christ with an oath? If so, whence the difference in so short a time? There is but one answer, he was clothed with power from on high, he was filled with the Holy Ghost.

This divine gift was both *individual and corporate*. While the promise was to all the apostles, yet it was to guide their individual hearts and illumine their minds as individuals for the work they had to do.

It is a perennial gift. It was no temporary expedient. It was no transient enduement of power, but a permanent bestowal of power. It did not pass away with the enthusiasm of the day. This gift was made once for all time and is not to be repeated in its first glorious manifestations at the opening of the kingdom of heaven to the Jews and Gentiles.

The Spirit has come and is an abiding guest in the Church; He is a living, actual presence in the kingdom of heaven. Christ's work was once for all, and the Spirit came for all time to come and His presence is available today; it was no special gift to official and priestly aristocracy; no gift for only one age and one people; but was given for all time to come and every individual in Christendom has access to this heavenly guest; if any man will open his heart to receive Him, He will come in and sup with him and become an abiding guest.

The apostles were blessed with the power to perform miracles, and while that may be withheld from the Church today, yet every Christian who complies with the conditions of salvation receives the Spirit of God as an indwelling guest. This spiritual power cannot be

understood by materialists. On the day of Pentecost some thought the apostles were drunk with new wine. When Paul preached before King Agrippa, Festus thought he was beside himself, so those who are blessed by the indwelling spirit and engaged in intensive work in the Master's service are often misunderstood.

On what is the Church of today leaning for power? This is an important inquiry to be made as to what constitutes the real power of the Church. It is not material power manifest in extensive domains depending upon guns, armies, navies; not in wealth that too frequently brings curses instead of blessings; not in numbers, for God would rather have ten consecrated than a hundred indifferent members; not in the patronage of influential people, for without the spirit of God they would be no help; not in state recognition, for that weakens rather than strengthens the Church; not in the multiplication of organizations, for this may divide instead of centralizing the effort to save souls; not in advertising and trumpet-blowing, for this may be the means of losing sight of the real purpose of the Church. The great need of the Church today is the recognition of the presence and power of the Spirit of God and the preparation of the hearts of its members for the inflowing of this spiritual power and its influence upon their lives and labours. I fear the Church is losing this power. The Church of today is addressing itself to other questions, busy about church buildings, pipe organs, mechanical arrangements, enlarged equipment, comparing themselves with others; when the Church should be engaged in the work of the Lord and in prayer that would bring to them the power of the Holy Spirit; that would bring this divine energy that would bless the church and make it a holy

church, an inspired church, instead of one that boasts of being a great church and a rich church.

Note the promise and purpose of this power. "That ye may be strengthened with power through his spirit in the inner man." "What is the exceeding greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which is wrought in us when he raised him from the dead?" "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, to world without end." "Know him and the power of the resurrection."

What is this God-given power? This power that worketh in us, this indwelling of God's spirit, this power of Christ's resurrection, this power of everlasting life? Is it not the soul consciousness that has been awakened in us? Is it not the consciousness of our relation to God that enables us to receive the spirit of His power? Is it not that He has given to us the power to discover the awfulness of sin and the great need of salvation? Is it not that we are made to feel the need of divine strength in the inner man for love and service? Is it not the answer to the soul cry for divine help and presence in all the relationships and walks of life? Is it not His spirit bearing testimony with our spirit that we are sons of God. For this purpose this power is given; for love and service, to bless us in our joys and sorrows, to support and comfort us, to assist us in resisting the tempter, to enable us to endure hardships like good soldiers, to keep the heart full of zeal for the Master's work; to heighten our spiritual gifts, to strengthen us for the labours of life, to support us when tempted, to embolden us to preach

the Gospel and to keep us faithful to the day of redemption.

This power, this dynamic power, should strengthen our faith in God's word; this coming of the spirit of power was prophesied, promised, fulfilled and became history; these things being true, we may accept the word of God as a message from on high. This mighty power should strengthen our faith in Jesus as the promised Messiah, as the risen, ever present, living Saviour. This divine presence should incite us to holy living and be the mighty impelling force in the preaching of the Gospel and in strengthening the brethren in every good work and deed.

This divine power has been a great blessing to those who have used it. It is manifest wherever the Christian goes in the work of the Lord; in the slums of our large cities, in darkest Africa, in idolatrous Asia, in mountain fastnesses; wherever the Christian worker goes, there Christ goes and His presence abides with him. It works through man's weaknesses as well as in his strength. Paul's thorn in the flesh brought forth the promise from God, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." God works with broken reeds; God uses the weak things to confound the mighty.

This power is needed today. Power to awaken sinners that are dead in trespasses and sin; power to awaken churches that have become lukewarm; power to stand against the allurements that are enticing God's people to desecrate the Lord's Day; power to oppose wickedness in high places; power to pluck sinners from the fires of shame and hell; power to make Christ a living presence working amongst men; power to turn the world upside down. This power

comes from having the Spirit of God spread abroad in our hearts.

The apostles were to show to the world the fulfillment of this promise by being witnesses for Christ. "Ye shall be my witnesses," "witnesses unto me," not to one another, but unto Christ; "witness unto me" and I will sustain you, comfort you and give you power. The term witness is a strong one; it suggests ye shall be my martyrs. That did not signify it would be necessary for every man that witnessed to seal his testimony with his blood, but every man that did so was a martyr before he died. Persecution does not make a martyr, it finds him. Ye shall be my witnesses wherever you go, to the uttermost parts of the earth; ye have received power to take my place and to represent me throughout the world. This duty of witnessing was not laid upon one order of men, but upon all, from the least to the greatest. This witnessing for Christ is the work of the Church and will be for all time to come; it is essential for the growth of the kingdom. The subject of the witness is Christ, and it must be in the Holy Spirit and power.

It was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost when the Apostle Peter, without fear or favour declared that this Christ had been made both Lord and Christ. Endued with this mighty power, Peter begins to witness for Christ. He has a new start, a glorious start with a power that supported him till God called him to his heavenly home. Follow him from Jerusalem to Lydda, where he healed Æneas; to Joppa, where he raised Dorcas to life; to Cæsarea, where he opened the kingdom to the Gentiles; and on to Pontus, to Bithynia, to Cappadocia and throughout Asia Minor, and everywhere he goes, he stands true to his calling;

everywhere, the power of the Holy Ghost is manifest, in tearing down the strongholds of Satan, in planting the Cross of Christ.

It was fulfilled in Stephen when he stood before the Sanhedrin and said to them, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and in ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers." The promise of this power was fulfilled when Philip preached the kingdom of God to the Samaritans and many believed and were baptized; it was fulfilled in Barnabas, a man full of wisdom and the Holy Ghost, who sold a possession and gave it to the Lord and went about doing good; it was fulfilled in the Apostle Paul, when brave as a lion he stood before Felix, a cruel governor, a licentious man and unjust judge and reasoned on righteousness, temperance and judgment to come.

This power was fulfilled in Athanasius when he resisted the base progeny of Constantine against the world; it was fulfilled in Ambrose when he drove Theodosius back from the gates of Milan because his hands were wet with the blood from the massacre of Thessalonica; it was fulfilled in Savonarola, when he resisted the Medicis and refused to absolve Lorenzo until he set Florence free; it was fulfilled in Luther, the priest of Wittenberg, when he stood before the papal hierarchy with the Bible in one hand and the other hand over his heart, and declared, "I cannot retract, God help me." It was fulfilled in Massillon, when he made Louis XIV. shrink before his terrible warnings; it was fulfilled in the London clergy, when

they refused to read the treacherous edict of King James; it was fulfilled by Wycliff, when he translated the Scriptures in the vernacular of the people and stood for the truth before the tribunal of Oxford; it has been fulfilled thousands of times by the torchbearers of the Cross, by such men as Huss, Knox, Moffatt, Livingstone, Carey, Judson, Baxter and Morrison; and such men as the Wesleys, Edwards, Beechers and Campbells. No age has been without this divine power manifest in the men and women who have bravely witnessed for Christ. It is this power, the dynamic energy of the Holy Spirit that is needed today.

May the Bridegroom awaken the bride to the importance of seeking and praying for this much-needed power that will cause her to travail and bring forth consecrated preachers of the Gospel, devout missionaries of the Cross, Christian parents in our homes, Christian business men in the realm of commerce, Christian statesmen in the halls of justice and Christian teachers in our schools.

THE WAY OF SALVATION

Sirs, what must I do to be saved?—Acts 16: 30.

THE events recorded in the sixteenth chapter of Acts are not the only ones that have made the city of Philippi famous in history. About one hundred years before Paul and Silas visited this city, a great battle was fought here, between the armies of Brutus and Cassius on one side, and those of Anthony and young Octavius on the other; the decision of which did much to shape the subsequent history of the Roman Empire. But the introduction of the Gospel of Christ in this city which resulted in the first fruits of the Gospel on European soil, had more to do with the history of the world than the Roman battles. When Paul and his fellow-labourer came to the city, they went to the river-side where they found Lydia, a seller of purple, and some of her household and friends engaged in prayer; to them the apostles preached the Gospel of the Kingdom; they continued to preach for many days till they were arrested, beaten with stripes and carried to the prison with a charge to the jailer to keep them safely. In order to do so, he put them in the inner prison, a dark dungeon below the ordinary place of confinement, made their feet fast in the stocks and left them smarting and bleeding from their shameful beating. Paul had been accustomed to prisons and evil treatment, and instead of complaining as most

people under similar circumstances would do, he and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God, and counted themselves worthy to suffer for His name's sake. The prisoners heard them. It must have sounded strange to hear voices of praise and thanksgiving in that old prison, which doubtless had often resounded with complaints, curses and cries of pain from severe punishment. There was an august listener beside the prisoners—the Lord of the heavens and the earth heard, and, “Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.”

The earthquake opened the prison doors and released Paul and Silas and the other prisoners, and awakened the jailer from his sleep; who, beholding the open doors, was about to kill himself, thinking the prisoners might escape; he preferred suicide rather than suffer the penalty to be inflicted upon him if they did so. But he was arrested in the act of self-destruction by the call of the apostle, “Do thyself no harm for we are all here.” The jailer became much alarmed in hearing the voice of Paul and he sprang in and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas and brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” It was the preaching of the Apostle Paul that made Felix tremble; it was fear on the part of Herod under the preaching of John the Baptist that made him think of reformation; it was fear on the part of Belshazzar that made him tremble before Daniel when he interpreted the handwriting on the wall. The jailer went to sleep in peace, but awoke to stand before the messengers of God in fear and trembling. Why did he ask the question? Perhaps

he had heard the damsel speak of them as "the servants of the Most High God who show us the way of salvation." Therefore, he called out to them, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

This question was asked by an alien to the commonwealth of Israel, by a stranger to the covenant of promise. The question implies that he was under condemnation of sin and had to do something to be saved. He addressed the questions to the servants of the Most High God, who had received a commission to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles and to turn them from darkness to light and from Satan to God.

It may be well to consider what salvation is not. This salvation that the apostles were preaching was not salvation from the old Jewish law, for that was set aside and nailed to the Cross; it was not salvation from the Roman subjection; it was not salvation from the justice of God; it was not salvation from the retribution that comes from a sinful life; it was not salvation from the penalty of sin that follows evil thoughts, evil words and evil deeds. Every one who speaks English knows the use of the word "saved." For instance, being saved from fire, from drowning, from bodily destruction. It has a similar meaning when applied to moral and spiritual ruin and death. The salvation spoken of here means salvation from sin; it implies a certain kind of deliverance from the depression which springs from the knowledge and fear of our evil way of doing; it implies a relief from the shame of guilt; it implies a desire to have an awakened conscience pacified; it implies the victory of faith, hope, and safety through our Lord Jesus Christ; it implies the remission of our sins but not relief from the suffering that sins may have brought upon us, for we have

to reap what we sow. This salvation is not only deliverance from sin and the breaking of evil habits, but it implies the turning about and the training of every power and affection to the ideals of the perfect man in Christ Jesus. This salvation implies a life of service for God and mankind; it means not only building of Christian character, but the serving of humanity.

We are not discussing what must the heavenly Father do to save us, nor what must Christ do to save us, nor what must the Holy Spirit do to save us, nor what must our friends do to save us. These agencies have been doing, are doing and will continue to do their part. Man has something to do toward saving himself. Jesus said—"Ye are my disciples if ye *do* what I command you." "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and *do* not the things I say unto you?" "Not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that *doeth* the will of my Father which is in heaven." Peter said to the multitude of Jews on the day of Pentecost, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation."

The question is not what Noah, Abraham or Moses had to do to be saved; it is not what the thief at the side of Christ had to do to be saved; it is not what the Jew had to do to be saved, for the Jew had to offer a sacrifice, the Jew had to bring a lamb for an offering. We are not living under the Jewish law, for "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us up to Christ, but since Christ has come, we are no longer under the schoolmaster." The question is what must we do to be saved, who live in this dispensation.

The answer should be Scripturally correct, because pardon, peace, safety and happiness in life, death and eternity depend upon it. What must I do to be saved

from sin, its love, power and condemnation? Saved in the kingdom of God, saved to holiness, and saved to service. The answer will not be found in nature. It may speak of the power, knowledge and wisdom of God, but not of His mercy and love. The answer will not be found in the Old Testament. It would be absurd to turn to the Pentateuch, the Psalms and the prophets to learn how to come to a knowledge of salvation by remission of sins under our Lord and Saviour.

The answer will not be found in the books of man, for man, by searching, could not learn the way of salvation till it was revealed in the New Testament Scriptures.

Where shall we find the answer to this all-important question? We must seek the answer to this question as it is revealed in the New Testament and in accordance with the terms established by divine authority, and under the last covenant that God has made with man. God has made several covenants with men; His last covenant is now in force. Centuries after the death of Moses, God spoke to Jeremiah, saying, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their hearts will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people; and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every

man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity and their sin will I remember no more " (Jeremiah 31: 31-34).

Herein is a striking difference between the covenant God made with Moses and the one He promised to make with the house of Israel and Judah. Moses was the mediator of the old covenant; Jesus Christ the mediator of the new; the old was written upon the tables of stone; the new is written upon the tables of the heart; under the old, sins were forgiven provisionally; under the new, sins are forgiven absolutely; under the old, many were embraced who knew not the Lord and had to be taught to know Him; under the new, all those who are embraced know Him from the least to the greatest; the old was temporary; the new is eternal. Thus in seeking our salvation we must look to the new covenant, and a new mediator. We read of this new covenant, new mediator and New Testament in Hebrews, ninth chapter. A covenant is a testament, and a testament is a will; a will does not go into effect until the death of the person who makes the will. While a man lives he can give away his property as he pleases, but when he dies his will becomes the instrument, and the property is to be disposed and administered according to the dictates of the will. While Christ lived, He had authority to forgive sins as it pleased Him and on any condition He named. Therefore, He could say, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," "Take up thy bed and walk." This same prerogative He exercised when He said to the thief, "Today thou shalt be with me in paradise." Therefore, the question is not, what did a dying thief do to

be saved with Jesus at His side, but what must I do to be saved, living under the last will and testament of God?

Did Christ make known the conditions of salvation? Did He choose some person or persons to announce them to the world? Did He set a time and place for them to be proclaimed?

The great commission of Christ reveals His last will and testament to man. It is recorded by Matthew, Mark and Luke. In Matthew 28: 18 and 19 it is recorded, "And Jesus spake unto them saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." In Mark 16: 15 and 16 it is recorded: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." In Luke 24 it is recorded, "It behooved Christ to suffer and rise from the dead the third day that repentance and remission of sins shall be preached in his name among all nations beginning at Jerusalem."

Therefore, according to the great commission of Jesus Christ and the teachings of His apostles, in order to obtain remission of sins, the gift of God's Spirit, admission into His kingdom and the gift of eternal life, the sinner is required to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ with all his heart, to repent of his sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus.

Let us see if we can identify the person who is to proclaim the conditions of salvation to the world. In the sixteenth chapter of Matthew we read how the

Lord gave Peter the keys to the kingdom of heaven and assured him that whatsoever he bound on earth would be bound in heaven. In Luke 24: 47 and 49 He commanded the apostles to begin preaching in Jerusalem and to tarry there till they were endued with power from on high. Now, if we follow Peter (the person) to Jerusalem (the place) and wait for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, we shall learn what the apostles preached and what they told sinners to do to be saved. In the second chapter of Acts, we have a record of the apostles being in Jerusalem in one place, the record of their baptism in the Holy Spirit, the record of the sermon Peter preached in which he announced the terms of salvation to the world. This wonderful book of Acts also contains the record of the preaching of the other apostles, the record of thousands of conversions, and the answer to the question, "What must I do to be saved?"

Let us examine several of the instances in which this question is asked and answered:

1. The second chapter of the Acts of Apostles contains the record of the beginning and establishment of the Church of Christ and the great sermon of the Apostle Peter wherein people from sixteen different nations heard the declaration that Jesus, who was crucified, God had raised from the dead, and had "made him both Lord and Christ." "Now when they heard this they were pricked in the heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

2. In Acts 16 we are told how the pagan jailer cried

out, "What shall I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house, and he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes and was baptized, he and all his house straightway."

3. In Acts twenty-second chapter, tenth verse, it is recorded how Paul cried out, "What shall I do, Lord?" and the Lord said unto me, arise and go into Damascus, and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do."

The Lord told Ananias, a devout man, about Paul, and he went forthwith to Paul and instructed him in the way of salvation and the will of the Lord and concluded by saying, "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

4. In Acts 8: 36 an Ethiopian to whom Philip had preached Jesus asks, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" and in verse 37 Philip, the evangelist, said, "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest."

In each of the above cases, we find a different answer given, but these differences can be readily explained. When Peter replied to the people on the day of Pentecost, he addressed those who were pricked in their heart at his preaching, and believed that Jesus was the Christ, therefore, he had only to instruct them to "repent and be baptized." When Paul replied to the pagan jailer, he addressed a man who knew nothing whatsoever of Jesus, therefore, he instructed him to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and preached the word of the Lord to him." When Ananias replied to Paul's question, he addressed a man who believed in the Lord and was deeply penitent for his sins, there-

fore, he instructed him to "arise and be baptized." When Philip answered the Ethiopian's question, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?", he addressed a man to whom he had been preaching about Jesus, and therefore he told him, "Thou mayest if thou believest with all thine heart." Paul commanded the pagan jailer to take the first step in salvation, which is to *believe*. Peter commanded the believers on the day of Pentecost to take the next two steps—to *repent and be baptized*. Ananias commanded Paul, who was already a penitent believer, *to be baptized*. The apostles began preaching to the people at the stage of salvation in which they found them. If they had faith, they preached to them "to repent and be baptized." If they were penitent believers they were instructed to be baptized in the name of Jesus; if they had never heard of Christ they preached the *whole* Gospel to them.

Another explanation may be found in the fact that men occupy different positions morally and spiritually as regards this question. Every person is either a non-believer, or believer, or penitent believer, or baptized penitent believer, or a backslider. Each of these should be instructed as to steps to be taken to obtain forgiveness and to enter into fellowship with God. The unbeliever is told to believe; the believer is told to repent; the penitent believer is told to be baptized; the baptized penitent believer is instructed to add Christian graces to his faith (2 Peter 1: 5-11). The backslider is told to repent and pray for forgiveness (Acts 8: 22). The Scriptures are clear in their teachings, and there is no confusion necessary when the word of God is rightly understood and divided.

A word as to believing in Christ. In Hebrews 11: 6

we are informed that "without faith it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." In Romans 10: 17 we are told that "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Therefore, to believe on Christ we must know Him. Jesus said, "Learn of me." The heavenly Father said, "Hear ye him." The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John tell us about Jesus, and John concludes by saying "these things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Son of God and believing, have life through his name." We are to believe Christ, His teachings, His claims; we are to trust Him, trust His promises, trust Him as our personal Saviour who lived, died and rose to save us from our sins. This faith is to be confessed, as Paul says in Romans 10: 10, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Repentance: A godly sorrow for sins; a turning with sorrow from a past sinful course of action; it is a turning to the Lord Jesus Christ; it is a reformation that is brought about by following Christ; it is a turning from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God; it is ceasing to do evil and learning to do good.

Baptism is the obedience to a positive command of the Lord to fulfil all righteousness, to put on Christ. Paul says in Romans 6: 3, 4 and 5, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Christ were baptized into death? Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father even so we must walk in newness of life, for if we have been

planted together in the likeness of his death we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." These conditions Paul preached to the jailer and he complied with them; these conditions Philip preached to the Ethiopian treasurer and he complied with them and went on his way rejoicing.

God commands, and it is man's duty to obey. Says Jesus: "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." In the last chapter of the Bible it is said, "Blessed are they that do his commandments that they may have a right to the tree of life and may enter through the gates into the city."

This is a personal question, "What must I do to be saved?" Not what my neighbour must do to be saved, nor the man to my right nor the man to my left, nor some member of my household, but what must *I* do to be saved? It is not what must the Chinese, nor the Japanese, nor Hindus do to be saved. It is what must *I* do to be saved, a heart-searching, personal question. It is no worn-out, obsolete question; it is just as real today as it was nineteen centuries ago; it is just as important in the very heart of Christendom as it was in the heart of paganism; it is just as vital to you in America as it was to the jailer in the colony of Rome; it is just as imperative today as it was in the days of the apostles; the answer today should be just the same as was given in the days of the apostles; our salvation depends upon our complying with the conditions of salvation just as those did to whom the apostles preached. If we comply with these conditions, if we believe on Him and accept Him as our Saviour, we have the promise of the Lord Jesus Christ that we shall have remission of sin, the gift of the Holy Spirit and an anchor that will hold fast on that great day.

What must I do to be saved? What must I do, that I may be delivered from this, my sin? What must I do, that I may cleanse myself from this impurity which sullies my soul? What must I do, that I may rid myself of this untruthfulness, this dishonesty, this insincerity, which mars my life? What must I do, that I may expel this avarice which cramps my heart? What must I do, that I may shake off this lethargy which numbs my spirit? What must I do, that I may cast out this demon of worldliness, of self which shuts out Thy presence, O God? For Thou, Lord, and Thou only, art salvation, Thou only art heaven, Thou only art eternal life.

FINDING THE LOST TRIBES

Who are the Israelites.—ROMANS 9: 4.

Will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles?—JOHN 7: 35.

THIS question may refer to the Jewish dispersion among the Greeks, beyond the bounds of Palestine; it may also refer to the dispersion of the Lost Tribes in Babylon, Assyria and throughout Persia. This position would be in harmony with the writings of Josephus and with the general teachings of the Scriptures and other historic documents. James addressed his letter "to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" (James 1: 1). Peter addressed his first letter to "the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia" (1 Peter 1: 1). Hence Christ's statement that He came to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The question of the Lost Tribes is one of ever-increasing interest. Since the World War multitudes are turning with a deeper interest to the study of the word of God. Many articles, discourses and books have been written on the fulfilment of the prophecies, especially the part the English-speaking people are taking in their activities and diplomacy in the rule of the world. The question has arisen, are they not the descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel and are not their present movements in Palestine the fulfilment of the prophecy of the return of the Lost Tribes to the promised land; especially in power and control. It is

the purpose of this discourse to examine the arguments in favour of this proposition. Time forbids a discussion of the various objections that might be raised to the argument submitted. These have been ably discussed and answered. For further reference consult M. L. Streator's admirable book on this subject; *The Missing Links*, by Morton W. Spencer; *Bible Prophecies and the Plain Man*, by Marr Murray; *Fifty Reasons Why the Anglo-Saxons Are Israelites of the Lost Tribes of the House of Israel*, by Rev. W. H. Poole, D.D.; also *The House of Judah and the House of Israel*.

There are about 35,000 prophecies in the Bible, and at least 30,000 of them refer to the Hebrews, many of them to the Lost Tribes which the researches and wisdom of past ages have failed to explain.

When the tribes settled in Canaan, they lived under the rule of sixteen judges and three kings—Saul, David, and Solomon. After the death of Solomon, the ten tribes revolted and formed a new kingdom. After this revolt there were two kingdoms separated from each other, and were known as the Kingdom of Judah and the Kingdom of Israel. This separation was complete and the northern and southern kingdoms were ruled over by separate kings.

The Jews. The southern kingdom, known as the Kingdom of Judah, was governed by nineteen kings and one queen. It continued as a nation for a period of 387 years, till Nebuchadnezzar carried them as captives to Babylon, where they remained in captivity for seventy years. During this period their songs were hushed in silence and their harps hung on the willows. These Jews, according to the word of God, were never to be lost, and according to

Isaiah 3: 9 were to be known in all lands by the show of their countenance; that is, by their appearance and facial expression. Those who have travelled over the world, and have seen Jews in various lands, testify that they are a separate and distinct people from all others and recognized at first sight, regardless as to whether they are German Jews, Russian Jews, Polish Jews, Austrian Jews, English Jews, or American Jews. This is one of the strong points in history by which they are distinguished around the globe as no other race of men. They have never lost their character, their appearance, their ethnic qualities and their religion. It was also prophesied that they should be "a desolation," "an astonishment," "a reproach," "a by-word," and "a scattered and trodden down people compelled to drink the cup of sorrow to its dregs."

In all nations from the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, A. D. 70, the Jews have been unmercifully persecuted excepting in the United States and Great Britain, and these nations have treated them as their fellow-men and have given them political liberties.

The Lost Tribes. The northern kingdom, comprising the Ten Tribes known as the Kingdom of Israel, had nineteen kings and existed as a nation 274 years. They were then defeated in battle by the Assyrians and carried away into captivity to Assyria. There were four of these Assyrian kings that invaded Israel and carried away thousands of the inhabitants. The cities of Samaria that had been deserted by the Israelites were reinhabited with people sent from Assyria. There is an Eastern Tablet with an inscription of Sargon, whose name is found in Isaiah 20: 1, which reads, "Sargon, king of Assyria, came up against the city of Samaria and against the tribes, and carried captive

into Assyria 27,280 families." Those not taken into captivity, and who did not remain in Samaria, fled to other countries where they took refuge and established their homes and engaged in various occupations.

When the Jews returned from Babylon, some of the members of the Lost Tribes may have returned with them, but according to the number of the Jews and their servants as reported in the sacred writings the number of Israelites were so few that no mention was made of them. In A. D. 95 Josephus says, "The tribes are beyond the Euphrates till now, and are an immense multitude and not to be estimated by numbers." This is the last mention of them in national history. Their genealogies were dropped, but the Jews retained theirs in order that the genealogy of Christ might be clearly traced.

The Ten Tribes, according to the texts of the Scripture, were to be lost, and later on to be found. They were lost:

1. In being banished from their land. "My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him; and they shall be wanderers among the nations" (Hosea 9: 17).
2. They were lost in regard to language. Their mother tongue was to become a dead language to them. "With another tongue will he speak to this people" (Isaiah 28: 11).
3. They were to be lost as regards religion. With them the Mosaic law should be discontinued. "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, without a prince, without a sacrifice, without an image, without an ephod and without taraphim" (Hosea 3: 4).
4. They were to be lost in regards to name. The one

commonly designated in the Old Testament was to be dropped or to be modified beyond recognition. "And thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name" (Isaiah 62: 2).

Lest there be questions as to the Ten Tribes to be lost according to the purpose of God, there are other Scriptures bearing upon this subject. "I will make the remembrance of them to cease from among men" (Deuteronomy 32: 26. "I will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel" (Hosea 1: 4). "I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel, but I will utterly take them away" (Hosea 1: 6). "My flock scattered upon all the face of the earth" (Ezekiel 34: 6). "They shall wander from sea to sea" (Amos 8: 12). "Israel is swallowed up, and shall be among the Gentiles as a vessel of no pleasure" (Hosea 8: 8). These and similar passages support the contentions as to the Lost Tribes. This state of wandering continued for hundreds of years, but are now being discovered and found; as is evidenced by facts as the events of history record. The latter part of the book of Isaiah is devoted almost entirely to the story of the restoration of Israel—supported by many of the prophecies of Jeremiah and Hosea.

The discovery of the Lost Tribes. Some writers have sought to locate them amongst the tribes of Afghanistan. Some at the foot of the Himalayas. Some say they are the black Jews of Malabar. Some have attempted to identify them with the Tartars. Some say that they are the Nestorians. Some claim them to be the Mexicans and Peruvians. Some say they are the American Indians. Some, the Gypsies of southern Europe. But all these theories are out of

harmony with the glorious promises and prophecies of the word of God.

Some of them may have apostatized in Assyria, adopted the language, usages, and religion to some extent of those people amongst whom they were planted.

Some may have joined the numerous peoples that migrated from Asia to Europe, for there is indisputable historic evidence that there were successful migrations of tribes from Asia to Europe and they brought with them germs of language, civilization and religion that spread over Europe and their descendants had a stateliness of person, power of intellect and moral capacity unsurpassed by other races of men. As they travelled hither and thither through Europe they formed new settlements, new associations and acquired new manners and designations in so much that no living man can fully trace their progress or write their history. In the vanguard, those tribes struggled onward from East to West, prompted by an irresistible impulse whose cause is hidden in obscurity. That irresistible impulse flowed from East toward West and Northwest.

Any theory that these multitudes of energetic people should be blotted out of existence, or dwindled into some degraded remnant of mankind, is not in harmony with the letter and the spirit of the Scriptures. In these latter years societies have been formed to search out the wanderings of the Lost Tribes in fulfilment of the prophecies, and volumes have been written to identify them with the Anglo-Saxon race. Arguments seem to be conclusive that in the history of the Anglo-Saxon race, the whole series of predictions regarding the Hebrew people, known as the Lost Tribes, are

being fulfilled with wonderful exactness and completeness, thus making history answer to history as face to face in a glass. When Darwin announced to the world that we descended from monkeys, every philosopher was ready to applaud the theory, but when our ancestors are shown to be in direct line from the Most High, then it would appear as a mark of profound wisdom to doubt.

Who are the Israelites? What advantage is it to be born of this people? Much every way, because to them has been committed the oracles of God.

Is it nothing to be the teachers of the word of God? Is it nothing to minister and scatter the light to all ages? Is it nothing that He has made choice that through us the Gentiles may hear the word of the Gospel and believe? Is it not the high honour to know we were in God's mind ages ago and He made announcements accordingly? Is it not worth while to know that the Anglo-Saxon race has a great mission work to do, with a blessing for all the world? Is it not a great privilege to enjoy the benefits of the birthright of Joseph? Is it not of inestimable worth to know that behind the movements of this great race is the hand of the Almighty God directing the affairs of men?

The prophecies pertaining to the birth, teachings, life, sufferings, death, burial and resurrection of Christ were given in no uncertain terms and were fulfilled. Why not the texts that refer to the Lost Tribes be just as historical and literal? If two hundred prophecies and promises meet in the historic Christ, it is just as easy to group a thousand, to prove the historical Israel. Great emphasis has been placed upon the preservation of the Jews and the fulfilment of the prophecies concerning them, why not face and accept the facts about

Israel? It is not through any idle fancy or vain curiosity that this question is approached, but one that should engage the earnest attention of every honest reader. No one questions the promised blessings spoken by Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Hosea, but to say that these prophecies are fulfilled in the Jews, no intelligent reader of the Bible will accept. The failure to identify the race in which the prophecies meet and are fulfilled have led many to doubt.

The discovery of the Anglo-Saxon race as being the answer to these prophecies has grown in favour until it has become a fact of deepest significance and greatest importance.

We are greatly indebted to our English brethren for the publication of many notable works on this subject.

Contrast. The Scriptures speak in very definite terms about the two kingdoms: Israel was to be known in name; the Jews to be known as a byword and reproach. Israel was to be a multitude of people; the Jews were to be bereft of children. Israel was to be a powerful nation; the Jews were to be without might. Israel was to wander for many years and then to find an island home in the west; the Jews were to be strangers in all lands. Israel was to have a national existence; the Jews were never to be a nation until their union with Israel and their acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah. Israel was to be a Christian people; the Jews were to remain under the old covenant. Israel was to be driven out from their land, lost, then found, become the sons of God and to be used to the conversion of the world; the Jews were to remain separate from all nations, destined to persecution and reproach. Israel was to lose its old name and be called by another name (Isaiah 62: 2 and 65: 15; Hosea 2: 17); the

Jews were to retain their old name and their identity. Israel was to be taken captive to the city of the Medes; the Jews were to be taken captive to Babylon. Israel was to be lost and unrecognized; the Jews were to be dispersed but known. Israel was to be an honour, and no weapon formed against them that would prosper; the Jews were to be a proverb and a curse. Israel was to be a chief among the nations; the Jews were to be an offended and faint-hearted people. Israel was not to return to their old land, as were the Jews under the decree of Cyrus. Israel is called "backsliding Israel" five times; Judah is called "treacherous Judah" four times. Israel had nothing to do with the crucifixion of Christ; the Jews cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him." These prophecies are most marked.

Isaiah also speaks of assembling the outcasts of Israel and the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth and of setting up an ensign for the nations. Thus may we answer the question: Who are our ancestors? Out of what rock were we hewn? From whence the chosen people of God? And again the question of the text: Who are the Israelites? To whom pertaineth the adoption and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the law and the service of God, and the promises?

Christ and the apostles spoke definitely of the Lost Tribes. Said Jesus, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." To His apostles He said, "Go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Many of the Lord's parables referred to lost Israel, such as the parables of the "lost treasure," "the lost silver," "the lost sheep," "the lost son," and the lost in every case was found with great rejoicing. Paul made apostolic tours among them. There was a large

colony of them in Spain and Paul planned to go to Spain. This great Apostle of the Gentiles said "that his heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel was that they might be saved." James addressed his letter to the tribes who are in their dispersion; Peter addressed his letter "to the pilgrims of the dispersion." Simon said, "Jesus was set for the rise and fall of many in Israel." This could not apply to the Jews, for to them He was a stone of stumbling.

There are eight years of Paul's ministerial life shrouded in mystery; those years may have been spent in Britain. We know that Caractacus, a British king, was a fellow-prisoner with Paul at Rome. We know, also, that Claudia, daughter of this king, and Pudens, her husband, and Linus, their son, were members of the emperor's household. We know that on the return of this royal Caractacus, Claudia, and Pudens to Britain, Christianity was introduced to those "Isles of the West," and how natural and proper that, having enjoyed the blessings of the Gospel in Rome, they should plant the standard in their own land. Would Paul not be likely to accompany them or to follow them after his visit in Spain, especially as he knew that the Tribe of Dan had a large colony there?

It was Christ's grand mission to redeem Israel and to commission them to scatter His light throughout the world. If His mission was with the Jews it was a signal failure. For after these nineteen hundred years they are still under Moses.

We are now prepared to look around for our Saxon ancestors and see if we can connect them with the Lost Tribes:

1. *Saxon*. This name comes from Seaxe. Isaiah tells us that it shall be a new name which the mouth of

the Lord shall name. We are therefore to look for this new name in the word of the Lord. In former times this people were called Hebrews, then children of Abraham, then sons of Isaac. For the promise was, "In Isaac thy seed shall be called." This passage was repeated through the ages until Paul tells us "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." How called in Isaac? By dropping the letter "I," which is very common in the East, we have saac. The letter C being often changed to K or to X, therefore, we have saax. With the termination "*on*" gives us saxon. In most Eastern languages, sons is written sunnia, like the Scotch "*mac*" means "*sonis*." Thus McDonald means son of Donald. Like "*Fitz*" in England means "*Son*." Thus Fitz William means son of William. So in the East, saxsonia means sons of sax or sons of Isaac. This word has been found scores of times by our English brethren in various forms on stones, monuments, and in historic writings, until it is come to us in the present form of Saxon, referring originally to the sons of Isaac.

Strabo, the Greek historian, the most ancient Greek writer, spoke of a people known as the saxca who live beyond the Caspian Sea, who were called after their own name Sacae. To this people other writers such as Ptolemy, Pliny, and Æschuylus refer. Fully a dozen writers refer to these Saxons and in every instance speak of them as being a most enterprising and powerful people.

2. *The Isles of the Gentiles.* The ancient maps of Ptolemy show England and Scotland as isles of the West, and are named Javan. Frequent mention is made in the Scriptures of the Isles of Tarshish (Isaiah 60: 8, 9; Ezekiel 27: 12, 19, 25), the ships of Tarshish,

the men of Tarshish, and also the Isles of the West. These islands were sometimes called Tin Islands, because tin and bright iron was brought into the East from these islands.

Pliny speaks of the Roman Empire being supplied with metals and iron from Brittania; this tin was found in Cornwall, England. It was called bright iron and was largely used in Solomon's temple. The Lord, speaking of Israel, said, "I will send those of the 'escape' unto Tarshish and Javan to the islands afar off, that have not heard my fame neither have seen my glory and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles." In this passage it is indicated as to the country to which they were to go, and the missionary work they were to perform, declaring God's glory among the Gentiles.

The tribe of Dan. Some author said that to find the tribe of Dan is to find all Israel, because God promised that those who escaped should have the same meeting-place in the far-off islands. When the land was divided, Dan received but a small portion of the seaboard and, desiring more territory, he pushed northward and won a territory near Lebanon. Here were the oaks of Bashan and the cedars of Lebanon, and close by the commerce of Damascus, Tyre and Sidon, a splendid place for shipbuilders and traders. Dan soon began to make his power felt. He changed the name of the chief city, Laish, to that of Dan. He had a large shipping trade. When Deborah returned after her victory she asked why Dan remained in his ships. The people of the tribe of Dan, so bold and enterprising as to "push things" and to change the name of the first city they conquered, have been writing that same name upon other objects as they had opportunity

and so their descendants have written that name throughout the world, never to be erased.

All along northern and central Europe are found such names as Danube, Danister, Danan, Dannin, Danzig, Danbury, Danetz, Danaster, Danari, Daneaz, Don, Denmark. In Ptolemy's *Ireland* we find Dan-soller, Dan's Resting Place, Dan's Habitation, Dan Gan, Daniel. The old inhabitants of Ireland are called Danovians; in England we find London, Danbury, Caldonia.

Retracing our steps, we have in Palestine the name Daniel, Jordan, and Dan. In William Smith's history of Greece, he said of the heroic families of Greece: "None were more heroic than the Danans." In Keating's history of Ireland, he says the Danans were people of great learning and wealth; they left Greece after the battle of the Assyrians, went to Ireland and to Denmark and called it Dan's country. In the annals of Ireland it was said the Danans were a highly civilized people and that they came to the islands from Greece hundreds of years before Christ. Eldad, a Jewish writer, says in Jeroboam's day, Dan refused to shed his brothers' blood and rather than to go to war with Judah he left the country and went to Greece, the British Isles and Denmark. Grotius, the historian, speaks of the disappearance of Dan in the land of Canaan at an early age. The name Dan means "ruler or master." In Spanish, it was ingrafted into their title under the caption of Don, thus frequently used in proper names of cities, countries, rivers, and people.

Mr. Gladstone, in his work on *Homer and His Age*, says that the phrase Danoi occurs 144 times in the Iliad and thirteen times in the Odyssey and is always applied to soldiers and lovers of war.

A new nation. In Jeremiah 1: 10 we read, "See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant." Trees are God's symbols of nations. If a nation is to be destroyed it is to be cut down. If it is to be created it is to be planted. Such figures were used pertaining to Babylon and Assyria, Egypt and other nations. This wonderful prophecy may refer to the planting of this "tree" in the Isles of the West, where already there were commercial enterprises established by the tribe of Dan. To these isles there is definite history—"There came a prophet, a teacher from God and with him a scribe, and kings' daughters and their household attendants" (Jeremiah 43: 6). They introduced in those islands, especially Ireland, tables of law, a school of the prophets and a system of civil jurisprudence. They brought with them the famous coronation-stone which is now in Westminster Abbey, upon which all the kings and queens for 2,300 years have been crowned. The princess who came with them was doubtless the daughter of Zedekiah, whose name was Tea Zephia, who with the prophet Jeremiah fled to Egypt, from thence to Ireland, where she married King Heremon. With the introduction of these people the foundation was laid in Ireland that developed into a light that cast its beams over all Europe, in so much that Ireland supplied Europe with their scholars and professors. Rome sent her youth over there to finish their education. In the county of Fermanagh there is a round tower on an island in Lake Erin where there is an ancient cemetery with ancient monuments, amongst them a tomb hewn out of solid rock which from time immemorial is called *Jeremiah's tomb*.

The promises of God. God promised that Israel should be as the stars of the heavens for multitude and as the sand of the seashore. These promises were often repeated. God promised Israel should grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth. This promise has been kept in the Anglo-Saxon race. It has taken the great European nations from 120 to 500 years to double their population, whereas the Anglo-Saxon doubles in less than forty years. These promises, made many centuries ago, about the isles of the seas waiting upon God, singing aloud His praises, and being under the protection of His honour are wonderfully being fulfilled in these days.

Israel was to become a multitudinous race with great power. Great Britain and the United States, representing the Anglo-Saxon race, bear sway over nearly one-half of the human race. When Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph, he said that Manasseh was to become a great nation and Ephraim a nation and company of nations; that his seed was to become a multitude of nations and that nations great and mighty would bow down and serve him. Great Britain has been the great colonizing nation of the world. She rules over sixty separate colonies, comprising a territory the size of three Europes and more than sixty times as large as Germany. It is the greatest empire, ancient or modern, and it is fulfilling the prophecy as "a company of nations." Her growth has been remarkable, especially since the days of Queen Elizabeth. At that time the English Bible became a book for the people and England became a people of the book. It was read in the churches and in the homes, and its power was felt throughout the empire.

It was prophesied that Israel would become a

great maritime nation. The Anglo-Saxons' navies are acknowledged to be the most powerful in the world and are carrying more than one-half of the inhabitants and commerce of the world.

It was prophesied the seed of Israel should possess the gates of the enemies. Including the English people and the territories over which they rule, this prophecy is fulfilled with a startling completeness. Not considering the great harbours of the United States and those controlled by Uncle Sam; not considering those of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, Great Britain has become one of the gate-holders of the world.

She holds Gibraltar, Malta, Crete, Port Said, Suez, Aden, Socrota, Bombay, Madras, Colombo, Calcutta, Rangoun, Penang, Singapore, Sarawaka, Morocco, Hongkong, nearly all the African coasts, the Bermudas, the chain of islands, fifteen Chinese ports, these representing only a portion of the gates that this wonderful race now hold in fulfilment of prophecy.

It was said that Israel should lend to all nations and borrow from none. Behold, in these latter days, the tremendous wealth of these Anglo-Saxons! These trees the Lord planted have taken root downward and born fruit upward, so that the fowls of every wing come to the boughs of their branches. This Anglo-Saxon race coined the silver bullets that decided the World War, and produced the gold that made loans to other nations to the extent of billions upon billions of dollars.

It was prophesied that Israel should keep the Sabbath forever and while this transfer was made from the Sabbath to the Lord's Day, it can be said without gainsaying that the only nations that have kept a true

observance of the Lord's Day are the Anglo-Saxons. The continental Sunday of Europe is a hiss and by-word—the order of the day on the continent is made up of races, dances, bull-fights and commercial sports of all kinds. At the World's Fair at Paris all sections were open on Sunday, excepting those of Great Britain and the United States.

The standards of the Anglo-Saxons. The tribes had various emblems. The tribe of Benjamin was that of a wolf. It was said of Benjamin that he should ravin as a wolf. The Normans who came to England, brought with them as a standard, the wolf. These Normans possessed many traits of character that appear to have been received or inherited from some branch of the Lost Tribes. The Royal Arms of England are the lion and the unicorn. No other people possess these emblems, and the only people that had them was Judah and Israel. Judah was referred to as the lion, but never as the unicorn. Israel, on the other hand, was referred to in the twenty-fourth chapter of Numbers, as both animals, to eat up the nations, break their bones and pierce them through with arrows. The unicorn is a blend of two animals, the horse and the bull. The emblem of the bull stood for the house of Joseph among the ten tribes. The national emblem of the old Saxon King was a white horse with the feet of a bull.

How about John Bull? The harp on which David loved to play was the national emblem of Ireland centuries before Christ and for 2,000 years it was seen floating from her castles; it was stamped upon her shields and her coins. In the Union Jack you will find the Latin "Jacobus" and the Hebrew "Jacob." The union that flag represents is the union of Jacob's

posterity in the Isles of the West. The crowned lion is no other than the lion of the tribe of Judah. The other eight lions mentioned in the Scriptures may represent the young nations or colonies of lions.

Israel was to be a great missionary power. "I will bless thee and thou shalt be a blessing;" "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;" "They shall show forth my praise;" "I will give thee for all a light to the Gentiles that thou mayest be my salvation to the end of the earth." How wonderful the sending of Paul and Barnabas as missionaries to the Gentiles. It was the beginning of that missionary enterprise that meant the fulfillment of the prophecy. "I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance." This race of people send forth three times as many missionaries as all the rest of the world. In the last international missionary conference, out of 1,200 delegates, 1,030 were from the English-speaking peoples.

The coronation-stone which forms a part of the coronation-chair in Westminster Abbey is known as "the stone of destiny" and is of peculiar interest. It is twenty-two inches long, thirteen inches broad and eleven inches deep. It is of bluish colour with veins of red and white running through it. It was brought to London by Edward the First from Scotland, where it had been the coronation-stone of kings for over 800 years. Previous to his time the stone had been in Ireland, where fifty-four kings had been crowned upon it. The Irish and Jews claim it was brought to Ireland from Palestine. There is no stone of that character found in the British Isles, whereas in Palestine the stone is comparatively common. The Jews have a tradition that this stone was the pillar that Jacob sat upon when he poured oil; that it accompanied the

Israelites into Egypt; that it was carried with them to Palestine; was treasured in Solomon's temple and, thereafter, was brought to Ireland by the daughter of King Zedekiah, who escaped from Babylonian captivity and who, as has been noted, married King Here-mon of Ireland. It is strange that both Jewish and Irish traditions support this theory and believe this stone is destined to play a part in the fortunes of the world.

Israel was to be a great colonizing power. No people have sent forth so many people to form colonies throughout the earth. No other people have made so great a success in governing colonies. It seems the prophet Isaiah saw the Island Home become crowded and prophesied,—“The children which thou shalt have after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, ‘the place is too straight for me; give place to me that I may dwell’” (Isaiah 49: 20). Again, in Isaiah 54: 3: “For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.” Give us room, and Canada becomes a lovely and dutiful child with homes for millions; give us room, and Australia begins to blossom like a rose; give us room, and New Zealand springs to light with a progressive people; give us room, and colonies spring up around the earth, and in the midst of nations to bless the Lord with the Light of Israel. Give us room, and the United States becomes the crowning glory of the Anglo-Saxon race.

In this connection the story of Ephraim and Manasseh are most interesting in prophecy and promise. Jacob inherited the promise made to Abraham by God. Joseph in turn inherited the birthright from his father

MAN'S PURPOSE AND DESTINY

What is man that thou art mindful of him?—HEBREWS 2: 6.

THE author of the Epistle to the Hebrews is quoting from the eighth Psalm, which is styled the Song of the Astronomer. It was probably composed at eventide or night. David, looking up into the clear blue sky and beholding the starry host, the sun in his regal splendour, the moon speeding on her course with her reflected glory and contemplating the vastness and splendour of the heavens, was constrained to say, "Considering the heavens"—their immensity—their vast distances, their bulk, their number, their marvellous beauty, their law and order, and the power that created them, "What is man that thou art mindful of him?"

In this wonderful outburst of David, quoted again in Hebrews 2: 6, *God comes first*. The heavens declare His glory and the firmament showeth forth His handiwork. The universe magnifies God. Some men are blind and cannot see the heavens—"eyes they have, but they see not." Some see and think and ask the question, whence they came? By what power were they created? For what purpose are those countless orbs that wing their way through the boundlessness of space?

Man comes next. From one viewpoint, "what is man" in comparison with the heavens? How insig-

nificant! an atom, a worm of the dust. How little is man in size when compared with the universe? Only a speck whose disappearance from the planet called the earth would have no more effect upon the universe than the taking of a drop of water from the ocean. How little is man in the brevity of his earth-life when compared with the countless ages of the heavens? How little when we consider the limitations of his knowledge in comparison with what is known and the omniscience of God? How insignificant when we consider the many enemies that conspire to destroy him? From this view, man is but a breath, a phantom, a vapour that suddenly passes away. But, on the other hand, when we consider that he is made in the image of God, after His likeness and worthy of His love, the exaltation of man grows upon us. The value of a thing consisteth not so much in the quantity as in the quality of it. One diamond may be worth a whole quarry of stone, so man, in the image of God, with a heart to love and a spirit to praise God, is worth more than a soulless planet.

Man next to God. Man is the finished product of the creatures of the earth. Step by step the progressive work of creation was carried forward. The whole earth was fitted up as a mansion prepared for an expected occupant; it was built as a temple for a worshipper. Before the appearance of man, it contained not one animal amongst its numerous inhabitants that could worship God and proclaim His goodness, mercy and love. The Bible, in speaking of the coming of man, assumes a loftier phraseology, thus intimating his superiority over all the earth. Hitherto, God said, "Let there be light," "let the water be gathered," "let the earth bring forth." But now God says, "Let

us make man in our image and after our likeness." Thus intimating that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit were united in the creation of man as well as in his redemption. The Bible tells us nothing about the methods of God's working; it speaks of what God does. The Bible view of man is a religious one and not a scientific one; in the teachings of Jesus Christ, He makes no allusion to the origin of man; He assumes man was created by God. He never stops to prove that man is a child of God. He allows the greatest possible liberty to make inquiry about man's origin; He involves us in no theory about the origin of man; He places no bar upon the progress of those who wish to become involved in the methods God used to make man. He surely expects man to search after the truth, believe it and follow it. Man created in the image of God. This image is in the soul and consists in its capacity to resemble God in moral attributes—in a mind capable of knowledge, in affections to delight in holiness and God, and in a consciousness to distinguish between right and wrong.

Man but a little lower than God. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, he is represented as being a little lower than the angels, but in the revised version in the Psalms, eighth chapter, a little lower than God. Revelation suggests not only our kinship to the angels, but to God. As the worth of a coin depends upon the stamp of the nation that makes it, so man is of infinite value because of the stamp that God has put upon him. This difference in the Hebrew Scriptures perhaps was due to the author quoting from memory from the translation that was in Greek, or it may have been due to reverence to God, and thus the writer fell back to the secondary meaning of Elohim, which may be

translated either man or God. To be a member of humanity is a great honour; to have Jehovah for an ancestor is to have royal blood; it is to trace our origin to the highest height. It is a dowry, the price of which is worth many worlds; one may be an unfortunate cripple, born in an obscure corner of the earth, or be a criminal in prison, or a deluded victim of his own vices, and yet he has a dignity surpassing all material things. Thus in the progressive work of creation, man was made not only the paragon of all animals, but of a higher order, with a relationship to God in which the brute creation have no part whatever.

As a material being, in which we shall first consider him, he stands not only as the paragon of all other animals, but as vastly superior to them, as may be seen in the following: *The voice of man*. The lower animals have methods of signalling by various throat sounds; the dog barks, the cat meows, the cow bellows, the horse neighs, the monkey chatters, the snake hisses, the bird warbles, but nothing approaches the beauty and wonderful variety of sounds of the human voice; with it he commands all brutes, and they obey; with it he expresses the thoughts of his mind, the affections of his heart, the sentiments of his soul and with it he worships his Maker.

Erect posture. Man is made to walk uprightly; he is the only animal that can permanently maintain an erect posture. This is the natural position for him, and is the only one suited to his organization and habits. He could not go on all fours for any length of time, for this would derange the circulation of his blood, cause the head to drop, the eyes to become fixed on the ground, and the movements of the body to be difficult and grotesque; but in a vertical position,

his movements are easy and natural, his head sits beautifully on his shoulders, the eyes have a wide sphere of vision, his form is most commanding, his figure beautiful, and therefore is the perfection of animals in posture.

Expression. In all the animal kingdom there is not a creature that can approach man in the expressive features of his countenance. Nothing approaches the varied expressions of the eye, nothing resembles the charm of the smile, nothing approaches the facial expression of sorrow or joy, or the frown of exultation. Therefore, the intellectual countenance of man pinnales him above all brutes.

The brain. In the capacity of the brain, man, in proportion to his size, surpasses all other animals. The weight of man's brain compared with that of the orang-outang is as five to one. There are many differences between the brain of man and that of other animals. By much training animals may be taught to do things mechanically, but the field of knowledge lies beyond their power.

The skin. The beauty, complexion, delicacy, and softness of this is without a parallel. The skin, through its nervous sensibility, is a medium of great importance. It constitutes a channel between the mind and material things without. A multitude of fine nerves proceeding from the brain are spread out over our bodies immediately under the cuticle, making the touch alive to every impression of pleasure or pain; thus, the tenderness of our nature and the tone of our moral feelings and sympathies are closely connected and related to the skin. If we were clothed with the thick hide of the rhinoceros, the shaggy coat of a bear, the woolly coat of the sheep, we would be deprived of

many of the finer feelings of the heart and intellectual sensibilities of the mind, and would be stupid, rough and insensible.

The hand. This belongs exclusively to man. The same system of bones and muscles that constitutes man's arm and hand, belong to other animals, but modified and developed to suit the nature in each particular family; in the fish, they are fashioned to form a fin; in the dog, a paw; in the bird, a wing; in the horse, a hoof; and while these are beautifully adapted to the wants of the owners, if they had attained no more perfect form in man, where would be his art, science, elevation and supremacy? By this peculiar member of the body, man possesses the advantage of every other creature; with this he explores the bowels of the earth, rises higher than the eagle soars, crosses the continents, floats majestically upon the waters, raises ponderous loads, forms instruments of defense, builds houses, constructs numerous implements for cultivating the soil, writes letters, makes musical instruments and adds emphasis and gives expression to the many sentiments of his mind. With the hands he may entreat, may welcome, may defy, may mourn, and may assume the attitude of worship.

Could we view as through a magnifying-glass the various organs of man and see them perform their varied and continued functions—the absorbing vessels of the skin receiving supplies; the eye with its window, curtain and lens, photographing every object it contemplates; the ear with its hammer, stirrup, drum, recesses, and various paraphernalia conveying sound through its delicate nerves; the heart pumping the vital fluid of the blood throughout the body; the brain with its membranes and nerves holding communication

with all parts of the body; the epiglottis, the jealous child of the throat, guarding like a sentinel the trachea; the tongue with its delicate functions and peculiar waggings; the kidneys with their secreting powers; the liver with its excretory powers; the glands secreting, supplying, purifying and sustaining life, we would be constrained to say this is a wondrous sight well worth seeing; and yet it is continually going on in every body; all these parts are being torn down and renewed without interruption, insomuch that we have new eyes, ears, heart, stomachs and other organs of the body taken out of us and others inserted without our knowing it or feeling it; this work goes on year after year, so that the whole machinery is renewed from top to bottom without turning off the steam or slacking the speed. In this survey of man as a material being you will observe that he is closely related to the lower animals, though vastly superior to them. This similarity between man and the other animals gives evidence of God's design and wisdom in preparing their bodies and frames similar to each other because all have to live on the same earth, breathe air, eat food, drink water, and have similar habits for preservation and reproduction.

Man is an intellectual being. Each class of animals have their peculiar instinct, but man has reasoning powers that avail him for every contingency and carries him far beyond the instincts of the whole animal creation. The body of man, wonderful as it is, is but the tent of an invisible occupant, the spirit, given by the Creator. All parts of the body are valuable only in service of the soul of man. As he who occupied the house is of more honour than the house, so the spirit of man is far nobler than the body it occupies. In man,

the brain is the dwelling-place of the intellectual faculties. Here, in the silent recesses of the brow, they hold their court and maintain their ceaseless activities. Here, the mind contemplates object after object and scene after scene, and by combination, comparison and analysis it draws inferences and conclusions, deduces its ideas into number, time and space; order, proportion and similitude; truth, wisdom and power, cause and effect, etc. There is no greater difference in the stone, in its raw state and the beautiful marble statue into which it is wrought, than there is between man's primary knowledge and the lofty heights of his intellectual attainments. Admirable the arrangements, adaptation and service of man's mental faculties; there are the perceptive faculties ever receiving and classifying knowledge; memory, the power of retaining the thoughts and acquisitions thus made and of storing them away beyond the immediate sphere of consciousness; for if all thoughts were ever pressing equally upon man's mind, it would become utterly oppressed and incapable of study. There is recollection, the power by which thoughts are called up from the storehouse of memory, after having remained dormant for months or years, thus enabling us to live the past over again and thereby giving us a double existence. Endowed with these reasoning faculties, man has been enabled by his penetrating reflections, his power of analysis, his ingenious experiments, his rigorous demonstrations, to rear the great temples of art, science, and literature. Degree by degree, he has carried his calculations to the utmost depths of space and time. He has explored and contemplated every region of the earth's surface, delved into the heart of the earth, counted the cycles of its duration, analysed and

classified the plant and animal kingdom, invented the microscope by which a world of living wonders is revealed in the dust atom and dewdrop, invented the telescope by which he surveys the heavens, and by his mechanical inventions and scientific discoveries he has produced a magnificent panorama of useful instruments, implements, and devices for the service of man. With this marvellous endowment of intellectuality man stands upon the mountain-top of creation inasmuch that the humblest amongst men may say, "I think, therefore, I am," and with the Psalmist say, "but little lower than God." Therefore, he enjoys the distinction of being the only animal that thinks, reasons and worships.

Man is an emotional being. Man without emotion would be an inferior being to what he now is. It is this nature that imparts to life its peculiar and ever-refreshing interests. By our intelligence we are spectators of the world; by our emotional powers we are admirers of nature, lovers of men and adorers of God. Behold the variety of man's emotions—the emotion of alarm to incite from danger, of anger to make the weak vigorous and the timid brave, of sorrow to soften and chasten the spirit, of cheerfulness to scatter sunshine through the soul, of joy to inspire happiness and praise, of humility to abase one spirit; of taste to delight in harmony, beauty and sublimity; of love to enlist one's sympathy, attachment, friendship and affection; of hope to embellish with bright visions the uncertain future. Without these emotions life would be dreary enough, life would be bleak and passionless. Without them there would be no interest to kindle, taste to admire and passion to portray. Without them there would be no sweet bonds of sympathy, no communion

of saints, no endearments of home, no ties of love. In the creation of man's emotional nature our Creator has displayed remarkable wisdom and goodness; and man's life has been sweetened a thousand fold.

Man is a moral being. He has relationship beyond nature. He has aspirations and beauties that connect him with the supernatural order. As a moral being he is responsible to the divine order that implies the existence of law. There are laws to govern man in body, mind and spirit. There are the laws of natural affection that cover the bonds between parents, children and friends. There are the laws that regulate man's personal conduct toward himself, his fellow-men and his God. God has revealed these laws and will hold us responsible to them. Therefore, we are responsible for the preservation of our bodies, not to expose them to unnecessary peril; but to obey the laws of health by which they are preserved. We are responsible to the laws that govern the mind, to cherish and cultivate every faculty of the mind. We are responsible for the right use and employment of our affections. "Do thyself no harm," is the voice of reason as well as revelation. We are responsible for both natural and acquired talent; whether it be the talent of discerning judgment, lofty imagination, flaming intellect, or eloquent tongue. We are responsible for our wealth; it is entrusted to us to be used for our good, the good of society and the glory of God. We are responsible to the laws of our country—to obey and uphold them. We are responsible for our influence, because of its effect upon others for good or evil. We are responsible for our privileges, for the light of nature and revelation and all the means of grace that God has given to us. We are responsible for our time, for it is given as a period of probation to

prepare for an eternity to come. This responsibility as moral beings is to God our Creator, Preserver and Redeemer, and to Him we shall have to answer on that great day when every man shall be called to stand before the judgment seat of Christ and give an account for the deeds done in his body.

Man is an immortal being. He is conditioned for it and he has the possibility of obtaining it. He yearns for immortality; the disorders of society demand that men shall live hereafter to have an adjustment of the unequal affairs under which they lived on the earth. Vice is not always punished and virtue not always rewarded. It is the common belief of humanity that man shall live again; this is but the morn of his existence. Unless he is immortal there is no responsibility to God. In answer to the prediction of prophets, the dream of poets, the philosophies of the sages of old, Christ comes forth from the grave and boldly declares He has "the key of life and death," and that He is "the resurrection and life," and he that believeth in Him shall never die. The immortality of man is his high post of honour and the grandeur of his destiny. And though created a little lower than the angels, it is inferred that in his eternal home he will have a higher and greater destiny. This immortality makes man in every sense a worshipful being. Man, and man only, is the true worshipper of God who created him with a soul that calls for something not found in this life. God created him with a faculty that hungers and thirsts for what the world cannot give, for bread that will satisfy his hunger and a water that will quench his thirst for God and immortality. In this respect man becomes a partner with God and Christ.

Thus surveying man as a material, intellectual, emo-

tional, moral and immortal being, we are enabled to say with David, we are "fearfully and wonderfully made," and with Shakespeare, "What a piece of work is man? How noble in reason, how infinite in faculties, in form and moving, how express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a God, the beauty of world, the paragon of animals." God's value and estimate of man may be further seen:

In his kingly prerogative. "Thou did set him over the works of thy hands, thou didst put all things in subjection under his feet." God gave him dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. He is master of the world; the world was made for him. Not only ruler of the beasts of the field, but of the soil, the air and the elements. Man has demonstrated this power by conquering wild and vicious animals, domesticating them and compelling them to perform his bidding,—from the dog, whose idol is his master, to the vicious tiger, the roaring lion, the ponderous elephant, the poisonous serpent. Man has converted the wilderness with its briars and thorns into fields of golden grain, gardens of blooming flowers, and orchards of luscious fruits. Man has captured the lightning from the clouds and harnessed it for light and service and with this power he has been able to communicate with distant lands, pull ponderous loads across nations, drive his boats through the billows of the deep and navigate the air. He is not only the king of animals, but he is the king of circumstances.

The earth was made for man. For man, the rain falls, the dew distills, the sun shines, the wind blows, the soil produces food and the rivers flow; for man, the birds sing, the flowers fling forth their perfume

and unfold their beauty; for man, the forest grew in ancient times and hardened into coal; for man, the silver and gold are embedded in the earth; for man, the beasts were given for food and work; for man, fire, hail and stormy wind yield him service; for man, the whole earth becomes a cupboard of food and a cabinet for his pleasure.

The mountain may be high, but man climbs it, stands on top of it, and plants his banner there; the hill may be great, but man cuts it down to the level of the valley; the rock may be hard, but man blasts it; the iron ore may be imbedded in stone, but man melts it for his use; this prophetic dominion may speak of greater things of a divine nature, of higher attainments in a loftier sphere. His full dominion is not yet realized, many things yet to be conquered, many enemies yet to be destroyed, many stars yet to be measured, many things yet to be discovered; but with the equipment that God has endowed man with, his progress will be unlimited; and as all things are not yet put under him, when we consider what he has done, he will surely go on from conquering to conquest, from dominion to dominion and his hand will again take hold of the sceptre that he lost and win back the authority he once possessed.

God made man a free agent. When God launched man into the world, He gave him freedom of will, and that freedom has been manifest in the violation of the most solemn obligations. Insomuch, the image of God is much defaced and he has become the victim of many enemies; his health ruined and his moral nature corrupted. But our blessed Lord was not unmindful of him, He knew his needs, He loved him and planned for his redemption.

In redemption the Lord has shown the great worth of man. He revealed his importance when He said, "The angels rejoice over one sinner that comes to repentance." He revealed his value when He said, "Take heed how ye despise one of these little ones, for it is not God's will that one of them should perish." He revealed the importance of man when He made known the personality of man. The Lord loves nations, communities and families, but He discovered the individual man; the value of one man, no matter how ignorant, nor how low in the scale of humanity, is of infinite worth. The ancients valued man for his knowledge, but Christ for his possibilities, for his capacity, for his relationship, for his personality; he revealed the worth of man in the sight of God when He called Himself "the Son of man." He revealed this worth when He came to the earth and lived and died to save man. He hated sin, but loved the sinner, He knew what sin had done and He knew what holiness would do; He knew how sin had blighted man, and He knew how salvation would redeem him; if your dear child lay dying and would look up to your face and say, "Father," you would give all you have to restore its life. Christ sees every sinsick soul and has the power to redeem it. He tasted death for every man, thus showing the worth of every man; and through His death makes it possible for every man who complies with the conditions of salvation to enjoy fellowship with Christ. Therefore, in the creation of man, God did not make him as a toy to be thrown away. He did not make him to be annihilated at the end of the earth-life. He did not make him to become a curse, to wreak his mad and murderous impulses on his neighbour. He made him to be crowned with

glory and honour; He made him to be clothed with righteousness; He made him with eyes turned heavenward to worship his Creator; He made him intellectually and spiritually a little lower than God. Therefore, God promised to visit him and to be mindful of him, to visit him as a friend would visit a friend, as a father would visit a son, as a mother would visit a daughter, as a physician would visit a patient.

God is mindful of him, He ever keeps man in His mind. God's eyes never slumber nor sleep; He is mindful of him in infancy, boyhood, and manhood; mindful of him in all the toils of life; mindful of him in sorrow and in joy, in life and in death; mindful of him to provide everything needful for his existence and his happiness, therefore, how excellent is the name of God in all the earth! How excellent His name in choosing the earth as the home for man! How excellent His name in making man the subject of redemption! How excellent His name in employing His Son to redeem man! How excellent His name in giving to man the Bible as the text-book to study about the wonderful works of creation and redemption! How excellent His name in making man in His image and giving to him wisdom and power and the Holy Spirit! How excellent His name in giving him an anchor both sure and steadfast that reaches within the vale beyond.

“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty! Which was, and is, and is to come! Thou art worthy to receive glory and honour and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. Amen.”

THE DANGER OF DELAY

How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?

—HEBREWS 2: 3.

SALVATION is the most important subject that can engage the attention of men. It is of interest to the angels, the things written in the Gospels they desired to look into. On the subject of salvation God has displayed His infinite wisdom and manifested His love and mercy. The term "salvation" amongst the Jews was applied to deliverance and generally referred to physical deliverance, like that of Daniel from the lions' den; or political deliverance, as from the bondage of Imperial Rome. In the Christian dispensation the term is used to express deliverance from sin, its guilt, and peril. It implies a lost condition: men have lost the divine image in the soul. Sin has alienated them from God and led them into the paths of iniquity and shame. Sin has made men rebellious against the Sovereign of the universe and broken His law; sin has subjected them to disease, pain, suffering, and corruption until their understandings are darkened, their hearts hardened and their conscience defiled; sin has led them "to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." Salvation is to deliver men from sin.

Salvation is the message or doctrine that expresses

the dispensation of mercy to sinful man by the mission of Jesus Christ to the earth. Therefore, no theme is fraught with more interest and more productive of good. Salvation becomes the source of spiritual relief, the fountain of exalted enjoyment, the means of grace, the King's Royal Highway to heaven and the only hope of the human race.

Salvation! What music is there in that word, music that arouses and rests us! It is vigour to us in the morning, and in the evening it is peace. It is a song that is always singing itself deep down in the delighted soul. Angelic ears in heaven are ravished by it; and our eternal Father listens to it with adorable complacency. Who can tell what it is to be saved in the fullest meaning? Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard. It is a rescue, as from a shipwreck! It is to lie down in the bosom of God in an endless rapture of contentment.

Great salvation. The letter to the Hebrews calls it a great salvation. What a depth of meaning underlies this *great "salvation."* It transcends and excels the old in the clearness with which it makes salvation known in the proclamation of God's love. It offers pardon and brings new life to the soul. It rescues from the despotism of sin and promises the glory of immortality. It is greater than the salvation of the Jews, as the old was announced by the angels, the new by the Lord. The law was given to Moses by the mediation of angels, but the revelation of salvation from sin was by the Son of God, having at first been spoken by the Lord. The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Christ. Inasmuch as the Son of God is higher than the angels, so the revelation of the Gospel is higher than that of the law. The early

revelation was supported by terrible signs, the latter more numerous and gracious, God bearing witness with signs and wonders, confirming the teaching of Christ and the apostles for all time to come. The old revelation was in the letter; the new was in life and spirit. The great revelations of our Lord transcend the utterance of tongue or pen, and so we have the unspeakable riches of the Lord Jesus Christ. The old, spoken through angels, was chiefly of commands and prohibitions such as "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not," but the new is intensely spiritual, producing a new life in the believer and an inspiration and incentive to the highest possible service and to the worship of God; therefore, this *great salvation* is greater than all salvations that preceded it, greater than the salvation that saved Noah and his family from the deluge of God's righteous indignation, greater than the salvation that delivered Lot from Sodom, Israel from Egyptian bondage, Daniel from the lions' den, and the three Hebrew children from the fiery furnace. It delivers us from guilt and condemnation, from the power of our corrupt nature, from the dominion of Satan, from the sting of death, from the power of the grave, from the wrath to come and saves us for eternal glory.

It is great in its Author. It was first spoken by the Lord. Since it began to be spoken by Him, He was the first to speak it; and if He was the first to speak it, no one ever spoke it before Him; therefore, it was not spoken by Adam, Abraham, Moses or John the Baptist. It was first spoken by the Lord and must not be confounded and confused with religions of the past. Christ first spoke it in all its fullness when He became perfect after suffering and was made the author of eternal salvation. In the great commission

to His apostles, He announced this great salvation. In this commission He stated its character and its conditions. Those to whom He announced it "went forth and preached, God working with them and confirming the word with signs following." The Author of this salvation who first spoke it is the Son of God, superior to Moses and angels; superior to the ancient priesthood. He declared Himself equal to God in the creation and redemption of man. The same Author of our salvation is still the Teacher of the Church, the atoning Priest, the exalted King and still speaks to us by His word and spirit.

This salvation is great in the attestation which it received. When the apostles preached the resurrection of Christ, they declared He was proved by many signs and miracles which He did. Their testimony was sealed from heaven by miracles and gifts distributed by the spirit of God amongst the early Christians. The whole history of the Church has been a constant accumulating attestation of the truth of Christianity. Millions of believers have certified to the facts and promises of the Gospel by the experience of its influence upon their lives, insomuch that it is truthfully said we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses.

This salvation is great in delivering the soul from sin. Sin is a cruel master that holds man under its despotic power. Sin has effaced the dignity and glory, the heroism and harmony, the purity and peace of our nature and subjected us to guilt and shame, to fear and suffering, to death and the dread of judgment. The ravages of sin in the world have been so great that it has been declared, "The whole world lieth in wickedness," and is under the dominion of Satan.

Salvation is the means to rebuild and cleanse the human soul and to deliver from the terrible consequences of sin; hence called *so great salvation*.

So great salvation in what it costs. It cost a great price, not silver and gold, not the cattle on a thousand hills, not the topaz of Ethiopia, not the diamonds of Africa, not the firstborn of Egypt, not cities and nations, not planets and stars, but the precious blood of Christ, the lamb without spot and blemish. To deliver us from sin, our blessed Saviour left His home in heaven, where He had glory with the Father before the world was, and came to this earth that was ringing with blasphemy and smoking with crime. He became a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, endured the anguish of soul, suffered till great drops of bloody sweat fell from His face; He died on the Cross that He might purchase our redemption, hence so great salvation.

So great salvation in the blessings secured for us,— pardon of sin, freedom from condemnation, communion with God, peace of conscience and the assurance of immortal life hereafter. A change from a corrupt nature to a new creation in Christ Jesus, for if any man be in Christ he is a new creature; he is delivered from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son; delivered from the fear of death to the victory through faith; a saving from the lowest degradation to the highest perfection of manhood; a saving from hell to the joy of heaven.

This salvation is great in the multitude for which it is wrought. Christ became the Saviour of all the world. "Who gave himself a ransom for all." He broke down the partition between the Jew and Gentile. It includes all kindreds, tongues and nations in

its gracious provisions. It is not salvation for a single family or nation, but for the whole world. It is salvation for all time as well as for all people. It is so comprehensive in its purpose and universal in its width that our Lord will bring many sons unto glory. Many shall come from the east and from the west to make their home in my Father's house of many mansions. So great that John saw a great multitude that no man could number.

It is great in what it promises hereafter. "It saves for an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fades not away, reserved in heaven for us." It saves for an eternity with the just spirits made perfect, with the heroes of faith, with the loved ones with whom we have toiled in the Master's service, with the companionship of those with whom we have travelled down the journey of life, and with the company of our blessed Lord and Saviour.

"How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" This letter to the Hebrews was written to Christian people who were neglecting this great salvation and were in danger of eternal condemnation. Those are neglecting it who do not live according to its requirements. The word "neglect" implies indifference and carelessness. Neglect means failure,—this is a fixed principle,—the man in business has but to neglect it to be ruined; the doctor who neglects his practice will lose it,—the sick who neglect the means of recovery will die; the lawyer who neglects his client will lose him; the teacher who neglects his school will not be re-engaged; the farmer who neglects to cultivate the soil will have no crops; the parents who neglect the training of their children will come to grief; the man on the Niagara who neglects to use the

oars will plunge over the cataract; why, then, should any person expect to be saved who neglects this great salvation. This salvation may be neglected by not taking heed to the voice of God that speaks through His word by His messenger, or by His kind providence, or by events in our lives that should constrain us to keep our house in order. It may be neglected by procrastination—waiting for a more convenient season—waiting till older or more settled in life, but alas, such a convenient season seldom comes. The most convenient season is today, for “now is the day of salvation,” “today if you will hear his voice, harden not your heart.” It is neglected by letting other interests come between the soul and God, that preoccupy the thoughts and fill the heart with the love for the world that is against the love of God. When a Christian neglects praying, attending the house of God, in studying God’s word, in living the Christian life, how can he expect to be saved? A man in the insane asylum on Blackwell’s Island, for years was known to wring his hands, and cry out, “O, that I only had,” and when spoken to he would reply, “O, that I only had.” He had been a watchman at a railroad bridge, and when the bridge was opened it was his duty to give a signal light as a warning of danger to any approaching train; one night when the bridge was open the watchman failed to give the signal. The train was wrecked and many lives lost. When he was found, he was insane, and was crying, “O, that I only had.” It was the result of neglect of duty. On the other shore there may be souls who in this life neglected this great salvation and will be found crying, “O, if I only had.” The most hopeless Christian is the one that neglects this great salvation. This was ruinous in the days of

Paul and it is ruinous now. The worldly-minded, absorbed in secular things; the lover of pleasure, chasing after the attractions of the world; the self-righteous in their pride; the infidel in his boastings are all under the dominion of sin and are neglecting this great salvation, but when a Christian neglects so great salvation it becomes most ruinous to his soul, and hurtful to the Church. To lose soul, all one needs to do is to neglect this salvation. What an awful infatuation must take place to turn the Christian away from Christ.

The question is asked: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" As the context reads, "For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? If those guilty of neglect under Moses were punished without mercy, how much sorer will be the punishment of those who neglect so great salvation wrought by Christ. If God dealt rigidly with them and punished their disobedience, how shall those so highly favoured with the Gospel light be punished for their neglect? How shall we escape?" This is a forcible way of expressing the impossibility of escape. The great salvation neglected will result in a great punishment because of neglect. If God's infinite love exhausted all His resources to save us, what will be the consequences if we neglect the means provided to save us? If He has provided a salvation that required thousands of years in preparation to culminate in its full completion in the coming of Christ supported by many wonderful works, witnessed and preached by the apostles, believed in by millions, with argument upon argument to persuade to

faithful continuance and well doing, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? To hope to escape is impossible. You cannot escape by depending upon the mercy of God. God is *just*, as well as merciful. "He that despiseth me, despiseth Him that sent me."

A woman who had an important law-suit on hand needed the service of an able attorney; she was counselled to secure the help of an eminent lawyer, but neglected to do so; and when court convened, she went to the attorney and received the reply, "Had you come in time, I would have been your advocate, but now I am the judge on the bench, and all I can do is to pass judgment on your case." Christ is merciful now and ready to forgive, but yonder He will be the judge and our destiny will be decided by the words of salvation that He has sent to us through His messengers, for "to you is this word of salvation sent."

No hope of salvation for those who neglect it here, in the world to come. Mercy and forgiveness belong to the life that now is. Eternal life through Christ is offered now to save from eternal death. Those who neglect salvation are in a lost condition and the great need is to lay hold of salvation now to save their lost souls from banishment in the world to come.

Those who neglect salvation cannot escape by morality, for this sets aside the atonement. There is no remission of sins without the shedding of blood. See that ye "refuse not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." The Scribes and Pharisees boasted of their righteousness, and of them the Lord said, "Except your righteousness exceeds

that of the Scribes and Pharisees you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." Salvation cannot be bribed with morality or almsgiving. Salvation is of the soul and renews the life, and if man neglects it, he is lost.

Those who neglect it cannot escape by flight. God is everywhere. If you take the wings of the morning and flee to the uttermost parts of the earth, lo, He is there. If you hie away to the wilderness, He is there. If you ascend to the heaven, He is there. If you descend to the lower parts of the earth, He is there. Adam could not hide from God, neither can any man since Adam hide from the presence of God,—hide from that eye that never sleeps nor slumbers.

You cannot escape by resistance. Can a man's arm save him? "Hast thou an arm like God?" Who can make bare his arm like God? Who can thunder like the voice of God? Who can walk with stately steps across the ages like God? Who can uphold all things by his power like God? Has not God overthrown them that rose up against Him? How about Pharaoh and his host? How about those that left their carcasses in the wilderness? Who can fight against God and expect to succeed? Will you plead that your sins were finite and do not merit eternal punishment? You sinned against an infinite being and nothing but infinite punishment will satisfy.

You cannot escape by substitution, not by culture, nor science, nor philosophy, nor by any of the devices of man's ingenuity. Neglect salvation and you will be lost. Neglect it, and you are under condemnation; neglect it, and you will never see God; neglect it, and the doors of heaven will be closed to you. You cannot escape, for God is true and faithful and will keep His promises. When has He warned that He failed to

enforce? When did He threaten that He did not execute? Where is the promise He has not kept? Your only hope of escape is to cease neglecting salvation and to lay hold on eternal life. These things being true, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the word of salvation that He has sent to us, lest we should drift away in neglect. Give earnest heed to the Saviour, and the only Saviour, that offers salvation from sin. Therefore, those who are neglecting so great salvation should betake themselves to Christ, imbibe His spirit, live His life and manifest it in purity in thought, in kindness in the home, in honesty in business, in gentleness in society, in thoroughness in work, in fairness in play, in pity toward the unfortunate, in help to the weak, in resistance to the wicked, in forgiveness to the penitent, in love to our enemies, and in reverence to our God.

THE QUESTION OF LIFE

What is your life?—JAMES 4: 14.

LIFE: What a wonderful word, full of meaning and fraught with significance. Life everywhere, the air crowded with beautiful birds thrilled with anxiety and song. The water abounding with innumerable forms of life, many so small that millions would not weigh a grain and some large as the great whale that appears like an island rising above the waves. The earth teeming with life, some crawling and creeping, some leaping and running, some climbing the trees and jumping upon the limbs; no matter where we go we see life. If you pluck a flower you find a busy insect in its bosom. Pick a handfull of dirt and under a microscope you find it replete with life. The very mould that covers our bread, our jelly and disfigures our wall is a collection of minute animals. Life here, life there, life in the air, life everywhere.

There are seasons that are most appropriate in reviewing life. A crazy man was seen at a grindstone sharpening a large knife and every now and then he would examine the edge to see if it was keen. A passerby said, "What are you doing?" He replied, "Don't you see, sharpening this big knife?" Said the stranger, "What are you going to do with it when it is sharpened?" The crazy man replied, "Cut old

Ben Brown's head off, and stick it on again hind side before to let the old fellow look back at his past life, as it would take him all the rest of his days to review it."

What is life? Who knows? Who can answer the question? The farmer plants a grain of corn, and from it life springs, but the life he cannot see. The chemist can analyse an egg and make another like it, but the artificial egg will not hatch. Men will give fortunes to preserve life, but it will flow out despite their fortune, wills and wishes. Life is more of a mystery than the mystery of man, and man is a mystery to himself and to others. Scientists and theologians have for time immemorial been trying to define the sensitive treasure we call life and to solve its problems. But it is still the secret of God. It is a gift of God. Men may search in quest of its origin, how it came to this world, and advance theory after theory, but the only reasonable solution as to the origin of life affirms it began with God—is God's gift, and the crown and glory of it is in man. "Thou hast made him a little lower than God and hast crowned him with glory and honour." Such a view of life should impel to the noblest living. The question, "What is life?" is a Bible question, and by searching the Bible we will find Bible answers. In these answers we find life is the gift of God who is our Creator and Preserver. Men who knew not God worshipped various objects from which they thought life had sprung. In Egypt, the monstrous Sphynx that stood on the banks of the Nile for thousands of years was worshipped as the author and giver of life. Some tribes and people worshipped the sun as the creator of life; some worshipped water as the source of life; some

erected idols and worshipped them; some worshipped mythical deities that were to symbolize life. But life is no riddle to be guessed; it is the work of God and not a power flowing from an imaginary deity, or from spontaneous production, or from any human force directing scientific demonstrations.

A story is told about George Washington, when a small boy, taken by his father into the garden, who showed to him a circle of cabbage-plants and when asked by his father why they grew in circular form, the boy stated, "The seed was sown in that form." The boy needed no magician to carry him to the conception of God the Creator of the universe.

If life is the gift of God, it must then be a part of the divine plan. One person may look small in a plan that embraces the universe and yet he must be a part of the whole. God has so interwoven the human into the divine purpose that His program would fail if man failed to do the part assigned to him. The nail in the scaffold and the stone in the foundation of the structure may appear small, but they are necessary to the whole. The boy with the barley-loaves and the two fishes played an important part in feeding the multitude.

In the lowest consideration of the life of man we must look at him as an animal. And as an animal he is related in many ways to other animals in form, preservation, and reproduction. In studying the animal part of man we find some with the spirit of a tiger ever ready to fight; some like a shark, inclined to play the shark; some like the fox, inclined to be foxy; some like the monkey, inclined sometimes to play the monkey; some like the opossum, inclined sometimes to act the opossum. Says Henry Drummond, "If there is a

man who has nothing like an animal in him, I would like to be introduced to him." Therefore, on the ground floor of man is the animal, designed to become the carrier of the soul that is designed to attain the highest ideals and purpose of man. This being true, great care should be given to the body in order that it may serve the soul and be kept fit to perform the duties of life. This care is a trust committed by God for our happiness, the improvement of our fellow-man and the glory of God; to this end man should be temperate in all the walks and departments of life that he may enjoy health, serve well, succeed in his undertakings and prolong his days of usefulness. But a man is not to spend all his time in caring for his body; if he makes his arm all that can be made of it, or the leg all that can be made of it, he has time for little else; to bring every organ of the body to its highest development would require a task too great for our short lives; to cultivate every faculty of the mind to the highest pitch would occupy all our hours. Divine wisdom uttered the statement, "Man shall not live by bread alone," yet this is the way many people seek to live; they spend their time for bread that satisfieth not, and to gratify passions and appetites that perish with the body. They think only of the physical life; and close their eyes to the supreme purpose for which man has been placed upon the earth.

Again, life does not consist in what a man has in the way of money, or its equivalent in homes, stocks, bonds, jewels. What advantage is it for a man to acquire a fortune and have sin in the heart and discord in the home? What gain to accumulate great riches and by so doing be distrusted by men? What would be the profit to have a larger estate than a competitor

and have neither health nor disposition to enjoy it? Therefore, life is something more than what a man has in the way of riches.

What is life? What is this rich, priceless possession so full of meaning that no man can reckon; a treasure beyond measure? Passing through the Bible we find this question approached in many ways and has many answers. James says, "What is your life?" He answers, "*It is a vapour*," it is like the morning mist that covers the mountain, frail and transient, that soon vanishes away. Especially does he apply this to the wicked, with all their aims and cares, toils and plans, pleasures and business and boasts of what they will do—to them he says, "Your life will vanish away like a vapour, what then?"

Life is an inheritance. We have received it as the blessed heritage from God; it is the greatest boon that God can bestow. It is a wonderful heritage received from our ancestors that has been accumulating through ages past. An inheritance that warns us by the failures of our ancestors and inspires us by their successes. We are gripped, though we may know it not, by all the achievements of the race to which we belong and the nation in which we live; this bequest is so valuable that it is the envy of millions of others who are not so blessed and fortunate. We are hewn out of a tree that has been under divine care for ages, and we now stand at the topmost round of civilization, enjoying the heritage of the past.

Life is an influence. "No man liveth to himself." Every life is sending forth an influence for good or evil. The idea of a human being without influence is preposterous! Why, if you stand still, shut your eyes, and fold your arms, you exert an influence by the

position you occupy. A man cannot live without putting forth an influence over others.

The human family is a unit. "God hath made of one blood all nations of men" (Acts 17: 26). Individual influence is felt throughout the family circle; family influence sends forth its pulsations to the remotest corners of the community; the vibrations of its influence shake the very globe itself!—Mrs. West kissed her son Benjamin; "That kiss made me a painter," said West. Mrs. Wesley, in the rectory of Epworth, educating her sons for the great mission to which the providence and Spirit of God subsequently called them, made them mighty men of God. What might have Lord Byron become had his early life been spent under the care of a woman like Susannah Wesley? There is the influence of example. *Rev. John James, seeing a little fellow on his knees* before retiring, was influenced religiously for all life. The influence of great men like Luther, Wesley, Campbell and Lincoln know no bounds.

What a mighty influence Robert Raikes is exerting today for the welfare of millions. Mr. Raikes' influence must rather increase than decrease with the lapse of ages and centuries down to the close of time.

There is the influence of wealth. This talent possesses a mighty potency for good or evil as it may be employed. What can it not do to bless or to curse its possessor around whom it may throw its leviathan power? It can foster ignorance and vice, or it can erect institutions for intellectual and moral culture. It can start all the engines and artillery of infidelity, or it can pour the light of Christian truth upon the nations of the earth, and diffuse the light of saving grace of Jesus over the world. It can give its possessor

the miser's callous heart, and ultimately drag him down to the interminable depths of a miser's hell; or it can transform him into a Howard, a Gurney, or a Lawrence.

Influence is perpetuated. "Scratch," says a certain author, "the rind of a sapling, or wantonly twist it in the soil, and the scarred and crooked oak will tell of thee for centuries to come." Says Rev. Wm. Arthur, "A man may perpetuate his good or evil on earth long after he himself has passed away." You may at any time find a man sinning through the effects of the sin of some man of whom he never heard. Did you never mark, as you trace down the moving record of failures and errors of Israel, that when Jereboam was laid in the grave, one man comes forward who never saw Jereboam, yet sins after the sin of Jereboam; then generation after generation, men who are separated from Jereboam by a vast lapse of years, and still the record goes on saying, "He sinned after the sin of Jereboam, who made Israel to sin." Centuries after the son of Nebat has gone to his grave, his sin is cankering the souls of a whole population. Paul has been away from the world for many ages, yet at this day his deeds and his words are light and brightness to the thousands and tens of thousands. What are we doing with our influence today? Is it on the side of right, or of wrong? of virtue, or of vice? Is it raising our fellow-creatures to heaven, or is it sinking them into perdition? Let us seriously ponder these pertinent interrogations.

Life is a pilgrimage. Jacob's reply to Pharaoh's question that the days of his pilgrimage were few and evil, suggested that his body, mind and soul, faculties and emotions were on a journey, moving toward some

end, higher or lower, better or worse than the present. The Bible holds out this view that all of us are pilgrims, impelled by some impulse that forces us forward. Some impelled by the motive of selfishness, avarice, pride or vanity; and some to acts of benevolence and labours of love. As pilgrims travelling on the road of life, we are targets of the devil, whose business it is to tempt and hinder us and to destroy the works of God. Since Satan could not uncrown God in the heavenly place, he has come to the earth and is seeking to tear off the crown God has placed upon man, and dethrone Christ from the hearts of men.

As pilgrims we are responsible for what we are making out of ourselves. Therefore, it is said, life is what you make it. There may be conditions beyond the control of man, such as hereditary influences, which may determine in part what life shall be, but even these can be turned to usefulness. God does not invade the sanctuary of the human will. Man as a free agent has tremendous responsibilities and in wisdom or folly he moulds the vessel of his character to honour or to dishonour. Man is moulding the essence of his character every hour of his existence and every act has an influence upon its moulding. His thoughts and acts tend to the formation of good or bad habits that form character that determines destiny.

As a pilgrim, man has moral faculties and powers. He has a conscience that enables him to discern between what he believes to be right and wrong, and approves or condemns according as he acts. This is one of the most vital qualities of our nature. The man whose conscience is seared has become dead to its claims. In this moral relationship, he has the capacity of serving man and loving God. In this relationship

he is made partaker of the divine nature, and is capacitated for the world of morality and religion. Thus it comes that no man shall reach the highest manhood unless he cultivates his moral and spiritual faculties and powers. This may be done by prayer, Bible reading, worship and service.

On the pilgrimage of life, man stands in need of divine assistance. To this end Jacob said that the Lord had fed him during all his pilgrimage. That word means more than being fed with meat and bread; it includes divine assistance and leadership. From the beginning of our pilgrimage to the end of it, we are in need as much as an infant in its mother's arms; or the vine stretching out its tendrils looking for something on which to lean and climb. Man is on a journey like going through the Red Sea, needing the guidance of God as a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

The pilgrimage of life is very brief. Jacob said, "Few and evil are my days;" in comparing the days of his life with those of the patriarchs before him, his days were short; in comparison with eternity his days were shorter still. And if Jacob, who lived to be one hundred and thirty years, could say his days were few, how much fewer are the days of the average life of today. The man who lives to be three score years and ten has 25,550 days to live; if we deduct the time spent in childhood and youth, the time occupied in sleeping, the time occupied in eating, bathing, exercising, arranging the toilet, in going to and from business and in visitation and recreation, we find that man has for the actual duties of life in the way of prosecuting a business to success, obtaining knowledge and wisdom and worshipping God, less than 5,000 days out of the seventy years. Therefore, how few are the days

of life by actual service. "Evil days;" Jacob had trouble with his father, his brother, his father-in-law, his children, and add to this his own sins, insomuch, he could say "evil days." His answer was a most potent one and could appropriately be the answer of every man today. The Bible takes cognizance of the brevity of life under many different symbols and expressions. Scattered through the book there are eighteen of these answers to the question, what is your life?

Let us run over them. "What is your life?" "It is a tale that is told," "a pilgrimage," "a swift ship," "a hand breadth," "a shepherd's tent removed," "a thread cut by the weaver," "a dream," "a sleep," "a vapour," "a shadow," "a flower," "a weaver's shuttle," "a water spilt on the ground," "grass," "wind," "nothing." With but few exceptions there is in these metaphors the idea of brevity; in other words, your life is short; but a short race from the cradle to the grave—but a step from infancy to old age. On account of its brevity, its value is greatly enhanced, and should be conserved as a precious gift from God. Life is short, measured by its days, and as the years pass by, its brevity is more impressive. It should be conserved as you would conserve the last dollar of money as a stranger in a city without friends; it should be treasured more than you would treasure diamonds and rubies; its brevity is like a candle with the wick about burned out and none other at hand; it is like a book; infancy is the title page, childhood the table of contents, youth the introduction, the body of the book, representing the whole of man's activities, the last chapter representing the conclusions of life, and then comes "the end." Yes, there is the end to earth life;

every man has a period in which to live, then comes the end for which an adequate preparation should be made. No man should be so busy with his affairs as to overlook the preparation for the end. It was said of Whitfield that before retiring, he had everything in its place, for he did not care to die even with his gloves not to be found where they belonged. Peter Waldo, the founder of the Waldensian Church, sitting at a banquet, witnessed a friend bow and expire suddenly. He arose and went home, searched the Scripture and sought God and so became the founder of the Waldensian Church that kept the light of the Gospel shining during the dark ages.

What is your life? It is the childhood of eternity; it is but the beginning of an everlasting life. To every Christian it is a prelude to the life beyond; it is short, but enough for the main purpose; it is the beginning of immortality, the dawn of an eternal day; when the child is born we write him down as the citizen of the nation; he is a treasure of the world; he belongs to humanity; he is a precious little creature to be cared for. It is a little life, but it is life. So we have a little beginning here, but it is the beginning of a grander life beyond. It is the bud that shall blossom throughout an endless life. No man can bound his life by three score years and ten, for this earth is only a temporary home for the soul of man. We are all pilgrims traveling toward another world where there are many homes awaiting us. The tombs of the Egyptian kings of which we have read so much, were built to last for eternity; expressive of their desire for immortality. Being born for an eternal existence gives another and grander view to this earth life.

Everlasting life is an aim that is worth while, and

an impelling force to drive it on. The man who has a conviction of an everlasting life will have great convictions for the life that now is. He will have convictions of expressions, convictions of self-denial, convictions on the subject of character building, that are never dreamed of by those who care nothing and have no thought for the life to come; the conviction of eternity makes life an act that is worth while and emphasizes the importance of doing things worth while during our earthly pilgrimage, of translating the good in our hearts into action and of preparing us to answer on that great day for the deeds done in our bodies. We place great emphasis upon the life here because of the glorious prospect for the life that is to come; the man who has no thought of eternity and cares only for this life would make this life like a sparrow flying in at one window and out at another, with darkness from whence it came and whither it goes. But with a prospect of eternity ever facing us, and the bar of God before us, we have every reason to make the best possible use of this life. Therefore, let us look upon life as a gift from God, with plan and purpose to it. Let us study its real problems that we may cope with the obstacles that are confronting us and use our imagination and courage to plan our lives so as to include in our labours others besides ourselves; yes, to include family, social and national duties, and to keep ourselves spiritually fit to answer every call to duty, to bless the family, to exalt the social life, to preserve the national heritage, to love our neighbours and to glorify God.

To this end we need lofty ideals, for our ideals are our bosom companions and mould our characters for good or evil. The Lord has recognized the need of

these ideals and has sent his Son as the perfect man, the man who has the manhood and spiritual nature to set before us the perfect copy; and toward this perfect copy we should ever be travelling, though we may not attain the ideal, yet it will be our inspiring goal till the crown is won.

Lastly, the life of a man is the object of redemption. God's plan of salvation was launched when man lost paradise; it is the work of redemption to restore the image of God's life in man. God's method is love, and Christ is the expression of God's love to the whole world. He illustrates the power of His love in His service and His death and His resurrection. This redemption reaches to the life beyond as man in spirit never dies, so man redeemed, is redeemed for immortality. Pray, then, that the brevity of this life and its importance should make you feel its responsibilities; pray that your life in the home, the school, the city, the state and the Church should be what God designed it to be; one of light, and love, and service. Pray that you may so live your life among men that you will be enabled to say in answer to the question, what is your life: "To me to live is Christ, to die is gain."

THE RESURRECTION

If Christ be preached that he arose from the dead, how say some among you, that there is no resurrection of the dead?

—1 CORINTHIANS 15: 12.

CONSIDERING the testimonies to support the resurrection of Christ, I cannot understand how a man of ordinary intelligence can say there is no resurrection of the dead.

The resurrection of Christ presupposes His death. Did He die? Ask the Jews, Scribes, Levites and Priests who surrounded the Cross, ask the soldiers who drove the nails, ask the centurion who had charge of the crucifixion, ask John the faithful disciple, ask the loving mother; all bear testimony to His death. The rending veil, the darkening sun, the trembling rocks and the opening tombs testify to His death. The soldiers who were sent to hasten the death of the victim and who pierced His side, testify of His death. Joseph, who wrapped His body in clean linen, and the women who aided in embalming and burying it in the sepulchre testify to His death.

Note the means used to prevent His resurrection. Immediately after His burial in Joseph's sepulchre, a delegation of the Jews called on the Governor, and said, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command, therefore, that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest haply his disciples come and

steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead, and the last error will be worse than the first." The Governor said: "Ye have a guard; go your way and make it as sure as ye can." They took a detachment of soldiers, and rolled a huge stone to the mouth of the sepulchre, and set the Governor's seal upon it. The soldiers who were set to watch the sepulchre of the dead were amenable to a law, in penalty of death for any unfaithfulness. Thus you see every step was taken to prevent the removal of the body.

Christ's authority as a Teacher will soon be tested. He will soon have an opportunity to prove His power over death. His disciples will soon know whether they have trusted an imposter or the Son of God. His enemies will soon know the truthfulness or the falsity of His wonderful claims. The reality of the future will soon be proved; His pretensions to Divinity will soon be demonstrated; His ability to save will soon be known; the efficacy of His blood will soon be proclaimed; and His salvation for the world will soon be heralded.

The soldiers are at their post of duty. They are filled with courage. They know but little about Christ, and consequently have no confidence in the claim that He will rise again. They think the victory will soon be theirs. "We shall soon return to the chief priests, be greeted with words of praise, shouts of triumph, and receive wages for guarding the sepulchre of the dead."

But no; they are soon aroused from their reverie by an awful earthquake. Open fly the heavens! Down come the angels! Opened are the gates of Hades! Back comes the Spirit of Christ and unites with His

body! The Governor's seal is broken and the stone is rolled away! "Neither was he left in Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption." He comes forth declared to be the Son of God with power, a conqueror of Satan, of death, of the grave, and of Hades. He comes forth with the keys of life, death and eternity. He comes forth and shows that death to Him is but the rain-cloud, which obscures the sun that continues to shine beyond, and then to burst forth in more brilliancy after the cloud has passed away. He comes forth showing that death has no power over the real principles of life. He comes forth showing that death is only an experience of life, and not the end of it. He comes forth showing that life passes through death, unharmed and unchecked. He comes forth to instil hope and courage into the trembling conscience, and to dry the tears of the disciples. He comes forth to announce His authority in heaven and earth, and to announce the terms of salvation to a lost and ruined world. He comes forth to complete the plan of redemption and to prove the future state of existence.

The keepers shook and became as dead men. The sight of angels from heaven clothed in shining apparel, and the sight of the dead starting into life, suspend the pulsations of their hearts; as soon as they recover from the shock, they hasten into the city to relate such sights as they had never seen, such wonders as they had never witnessed, such feelings as they had never experienced. "Hush!" say the chief priests; "here is large money; say that while ye slept the disciples came and stole the body away, and if this comes to the Governor's ears we will persuade him and secure you! "

I shall examine the testimony to prove the resur-

rection of Christ. Because upon His resurrection rests His Divinity, His Church, and our faith and hope. Without Christ's resurrection our religion is a flimsy tale. With His resurrection established, the Christian religion is of divine origin and is the grandest and best religion on the face of the earth.

Some proofs of His resurrection are derived from His enemies. On the third day His tomb was found empty, and He was gone. If the Jews had had His body they would have produced it, and thereby silenced the report of His resurrection and added to their glory. But they did not have the body; hence, they could not produce it.

If His body was not raised, was it stolen? But who would have stolen it? His enemies would not. They would not have added to His glory. They would not have undermined their power by starting a report of His resurrection. His disciples could not have taken it. Even Peter trembled at the voice of a servant-girl, and denied Him three times. Would such people have dared to defy the Governor, the sanhedrin, and to confront Roman soldiers armed and ready for danger? His disciples, few in numbers, unarmed, unaccustomed to war, and scattered, would certainly never have attempted an attack on invincible regulars. If they relied on theft, they could not have hoped to find all of the soldiers asleep, because death was the penalty for the soldier who slept at his post. If the guards had been asleep, could the disciples have rolled away a massive stone, entered the tomb, and carried away the body without waking at least one of them? Could they have carried it through the streets, teeming with the passing multitudes, and not have been detected? Would they, when in such a hurry, have been particu-

lar before leaving the tomb to fold the napkins? If the soldiers slept, is it not strange that all slept at the same time? Do soldiers sleep when amenable to such laws? If they slept, is it not strange that they were not punished for it? They were either asleep or awake. If awake, why should they suffer the body to be taken away? If asleep, how could they know that the disciples took it away? The testimony of people who were asleep could not be accepted as credible. What bold presumption, then, to depose it was stolen! These arguments deduced from the enemies' reports aid in confirming the testimony touching the resurrection.

I shall next consider the testimony of His disciples who saw Him after He had risen from the grave, and who are competent witnesses. There are a number of considerations that add weight to their testimony.

The number of witnesses. His first recorded appearance was to the women on their return from the sepulchre; the second appearance was to Mary Magdalene; the third appearance was to Peter, who had denied Him just before the crucifixion; His fourth appearance was to two disciples on their way to Emmaus; His fifth appearance was to all the apostles except Thomas; His sixth appearance was on the next Lord's Day to all the apostles with Thomas present; His seventh appearance was to seven apostles at the lakeside; His eighth appearance was to over five hundred at one time; His ninth appearance was to James the Less; His tenth was to all the apostles on His ascension day; His eleventh appearance was to Stephen, the pro-Christian martyr; His twelfth appearance was to the Apostle Paul as one born out of due season. The great number of these witnesses add

weight and importance to their testimony. Had there been but one or two, the testimony might have been doubted, but the number was sufficient to establish the fact of His resurrection in any court of justice in the world.

Consider the character of these witnesses. They were men without reputation to impose upon people, without riches to reward, and authority to compel. They were plain honest men, such as are trusted for their veracity and virtue.

Consider the moral transformation of these witnesses. When Christ was crucified the whole apostolic company was filled with despair, and separated as if to go to their own homes and employment. But after the resurrection these same men have undergone a most remarkable change that fills them with the courage that nothing can shake and that enables them to stand before the same council that condemned Christ and declare to that council that God hath raised Him from the dead.

Consider what they assert. Had it been some complex question depending on a chain of reasoning, we might suspect their statements. But no; it is a simple fact of which they were eye-witnesses to which they testify. They could not have been mistaken because they knew Him and talked with Him.

Consider the agreement of their testimony. Over five hundred people with different temperaments, capacities and occupations agree to the same. A perfect conformity to the truth. Had it been a lie it would have been detected.

Consider the people before whom they gave testimony. It was before pagans, soldiers, governors, lawyers, doctors, Scribes, Sadducees, Pharisees, priests

and chief priests. Their first testimony in public was on a great occasion known as the day of Pentecost. On that great day they testified, as recorded in the second chapter of Acts, before people from some sixteen different nations. And the testimony was given in the languages spoken by those present from these different nations. As Christ was crucified at the Passover, so now His character is publicly vindicated at the Pentecostal Feast.

Consider the place where they gave testimony. Not in distant countries and foreign lands; not in an obscure corner of the earth; but they gave testimony where He was crucified and arose from the dead; they first witnessed in Jerusalem in the synagogues and temples.

Consider the time they gave the testimony. They did not wait for quiet and peace, nor for months and years to transpire; but immediately after His resurrection and ascension while His teachings and works were fresh in the minds of the people, while Calvary's Cross was still dyed with blood, did they openly declare the resurrection of Christ.

Consider the motives which induced them to publish it. All impostors deceive for their own interest. There is an interest of applause, wealth, fame and ease. These men who went forth to preach the risen Lord received in turn none of these interests. To the contrary, they gave up pecuniary interests, friends, position, safety and life itself with but one motive in view, to publish the truth, and by so doing honour God.

Consider the demonstration made to support their testimony. God approved of what they said by miracles and signs which they did before the people. They healed the sick, cast out demons, raised the dead,

spoke with tongues, and had the power to communicate those special gifts of the spirit to their disciples.

Consider the effect produced. On the first day they proclaimed the resurrection there were three thousand pierced to the heart because of their guilt, and cried out "What must we do?" To which Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, unto the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." "They, then, that received his word were baptized, and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls." History has never witnessed such a day and such a revival.

Consider the death of the apostles. Traitors tremble at the sight of death, and deceivers confess in the presence of death; but as death approached the disciples they preached with more boldness. They feared not, they shrank not, they trembled not, they took nothing back. In face of death—a death on the cross, a death on the rack, a death by the sword or fire, they marched right on preaching the resurrection and heralding deliverance from sin through Christ.

Considering, then, the number of these witnesses, their character, their perfect agreement, the people before whom they gave testimony, the place, the time, the day, the motives, the demonstrations, the effects produced, and the death of the witnesses, are we not justified in accepting the testimony as genuine and in asking how can any one with any show of reason say there is no resurrection?

There is a living witness called the Lord's Day. From time immemorial the Jews celebrated the seventh day of the week as their day of rest and worship; but the early Christians assembled on the first day of the

week to worship and celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour.

Nothing is harder than to change a holy day that has been celebrated for centuries and is one of the most cherished customs of the people.

What is especially significant about the change, is that it was made by no express decree, but by general consent. Something tremendous must have happened that led to this change. The apostles asserted that what had happened on that day was the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and that is the most rational explanation; in fact, the only reasonable explanation of the change.

The resurrection of Christ was an absolute necessity. It was necessary to be in harmony with His life and conduct. As Simon Peter said, Acts 2: 24, "Whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death because it was not possible that he should be holden to it." This passage declares He had to rise from the dead, it was the natural thing to do. In the material world there are laws that govern everything, and some things are impossible. For example: One person cannot be at two different places at the same time. There are laws that govern the spiritual world and there are impossible things in the spiritual world. And one of the things that is impossible is that Christ should be holden to death. Otherwise it would have been violation of the spiritual law for Him to have remained in the grave. It was the natural thing for Him to do. It was following the natural order in the spiritual world. Had He not risen it would have been a contradiction of His real character as the Author and Prince of life. He being the resurrection of life, how could it be possible for death to hold Him? It would

have been a contradiction of His conduct. During His entire ministry, He both claimed and manifested complete power over life. This was manifested in the miracles that He performed; healing the sick, unstopping deaf ears; loosening the tongue of the dumb; opening the eyes of the blind; and raising the dead to life. Therefore, it would have been out of all harmony for this Author and Giver of life, who has command over all life, to have remained in the grave. It would have been a contradiction of His commission. He came to bring life, and bring it more abundantly. He claimed to be the bread of life and the fountain of life. He claimed to have power to destroy him that had power over death. Therefore, for Him to remain in the grave would have been contrary to His claims and commission.

Considering the impossibility for death to have held Him, how could any one say there is no resurrection of the dead?

Consider for a moment the consequences if there be no resurrection. Paul declares, then our preaching would be in vain; we would be false witnesses if we testified God raised up Christ whom he did not raise up. All preachers from time immemorial would be false witnesses, deluded victims of a religious hallucination. These men who sacrificed and suffered loss of everything dear to them for the preaching of Christ; many of them suffering martyrdom, thus sealing their testimony with their blood, would be guilty of propagating a lie and would be classed as deceivers and blasphemers. Not only the act of preaching, but the substance of it would be vain; which means that there would be nothing to it. It would be as the wind, as an empty dream, as an idle phantom, and all would be

classed as false witnesses and should be driven out of court.

If Christ be not risen, then our faith is vain. The whole Gospel rests upon the resurrection of Christ. This is the central truth of Christianity. If this fact will not stand, all others will fall. And our faith would be wrecked, for who can trust a dead Christ to save loving men? Might as well believe in idols made by the hands of men and bow down to worship them. If Christ be not risen, our faith is a delusion and has been misplaced and all believers have held their faith in vain and will not be saved.

If Christ be not risen, those who have fallen asleep in Him have perished; they are gone forever; there is no heaven for them, no future joy and glory for them; we shall never see them again.

If Christ be not risen, the future is all a myth; this innate desire for immortality is vain and life hereafter a foolish idea.

If Christ be not risen, the last enemy has defeated and destroyed and we are still in our sins. If He is not risen, there is no atonement in His blood, no cleansing of sin by His power, no hope in Him, and of all men Christians must suffer the greatest loss and disappointment. But thanks be to God! Christ is risen and His resurrection is the best established fact in all history. It proves Him to be divine. "He was declared to be the son of God with power by the resurrection of the dead" (Romans 1: 4).

His resurrection proves His power over death. By dying He conquered death. "Since, then, the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to naught him that had the power of

death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

In the resurrection we see soul victory. In Gethsemane His soul triumphed in obedience to the will of God. On the Cross His soul triumphed over physical woes. On the resurrection morn His soul triumphed over the grave. It was a battle between flesh and spirit, and the spirit won. The soul is made a victor over sin and its consequences over death and its power.

His resurrection was necessary that He might proclaim His authority in heaven and earth. "All authority is given to me in heaven and in earth." "I have the keys of death and Hades." "I am alive forevermore." Yes, He is alive and moving in triumphant march, mightier than when He was manifest in the flesh. He came forth from the grave, robbed it of its sting, showing that death had no power over Him. He has power to save; power to "lead captivity captive and to give gifts to men;" power to wash us white in His blood; power to send His angels to welcome us into that everlasting kingdom; and power to give to us a glorious immortality; power to commission His disciples to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, baptizing the believers in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost; and power to continue to work with them in executing this commission to the end of time.

His resurrection proves the future existence. "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die." "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." He descended into Hades, remained His appointed time, and came

forth. Let our enemies speak of oblivion; let the devil tell us we live no more; let him argue that we drop into forgetfulness. We know it not. We believe it not. We have not so learned Christ. We know that we shall live, because our Redeemer liveth. We know that we shall see Him as He is, and be like Him. The schoolmaster is not dead because he has closed the doors and left the building. We must not conclude that our friend is dead because he does not look out of the windows of the soul. Death is but an entrance into the future life, or rather the continuation of the life, without the body, in the world to come.

Death, from the Christian standpoint, is one of a series of facts, related to our existence. Death reigns that life may reign. Death is the lower law and life is the higher law. Death is only relative, life is the real principle. A grain of corn dies to produce more and better corn. We die into liberty. Physical death is not the important thing in the Bible, it is secondary, it is essential in order to enter the life beyond. It is not only exodus, it is an entrance. It is dying to live again. We are not to look at the grave; but to look beyond it. We are not to look at death; but at immortality. The terrible thing is spiritual death, the awful thing is sin unto death. In Dante's immortal work he speaks of some souls moving about in hell whose bodies are still on the earth. It's a terrible picture, but the Christian view of the Christian life is that of belonging to a spiritual realm, of seeing men walk with God until God takes them home.

He was raised that we might have hope in a glorious resurrection. It assures us that we shall rise to be forever with the Lord. Christ is risen, and has become the firstfruits. He rose as the forerunner of His peo-

ple. As the firstfruits were gathered, so shall the whole harvest be gathered. He is the father and we are the children of the resurrection. Then, "Let my eyesight decay, let my body drop from me—let it wither, decompose, pass into dust: I know that I shall rise again, and have a glorified and immortal body. The Spirit that raised Christ from the dead shall raise me at the last day." Let death come; let it sweep away our friends; let it tear away the dear ones of our bosom; let our eyes, all gushing with tears, our hearts all filled with sorrow, behold her expire who was our counsel in difficulty, our comfort in sorrow, our friend at all times; but, if we believe, we shall see the glory of God. "Lazarus, thy brother, shall rise again;" so our loved ones shall rise, for Jesus is our resurrection and our life.

In conclusion, let me exhort you who are not Christians to seek the risen Lord. There are too many seeking Christ in the grave. They think of His earthly life with its outward incidents and tragic close. They think of His ministry as coming to an end on Calvary; but they should think of Him as a risen Lord, as a living Lord, as being the head of the Church, as working in human hearts, as governing the affairs of man, as blessing the lives of His people. As a risen Lord, He has spiritual sway over His people. It is not in His body that His presence consists, but in His all-pervading spiritual power and life that transforms the world's moral life.

The Scriptures assure us that Christ will come again in an hour that we know not; that His voice will sound, and death and Hades will give up their dead; that all shall hear His voice and come forth. No ear can be stopped to the sound of His voice on that day. There

will be a resurrection of the just and a resurrection of the unjust; a resurrection of the good and a resurrection of the evil; a resurrection unto life and a resurrection unto damnation. The thief cannot take his spoils, the beggar cannot take his rags, the rich man cannot take his wealth, the king cannot take his crown. All must stand before Him in the true light of their characters. Joyful will be the portion of those who have part in the first resurrection; sorrowful will be the portion of those who come forth to the resurrection of the unjust. If you have not risen with Christ from your sins, then you have no hope of attaining to the resurrection of the just. Oh, then, come today to this risen Christ, who is living and moving amongst men, who has the keys of death and Hades, who is able to save your souls and raise you up at the last day, open the gates of heaven to you, and grant you the privilege of sitting down with Him in the throne of God.

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